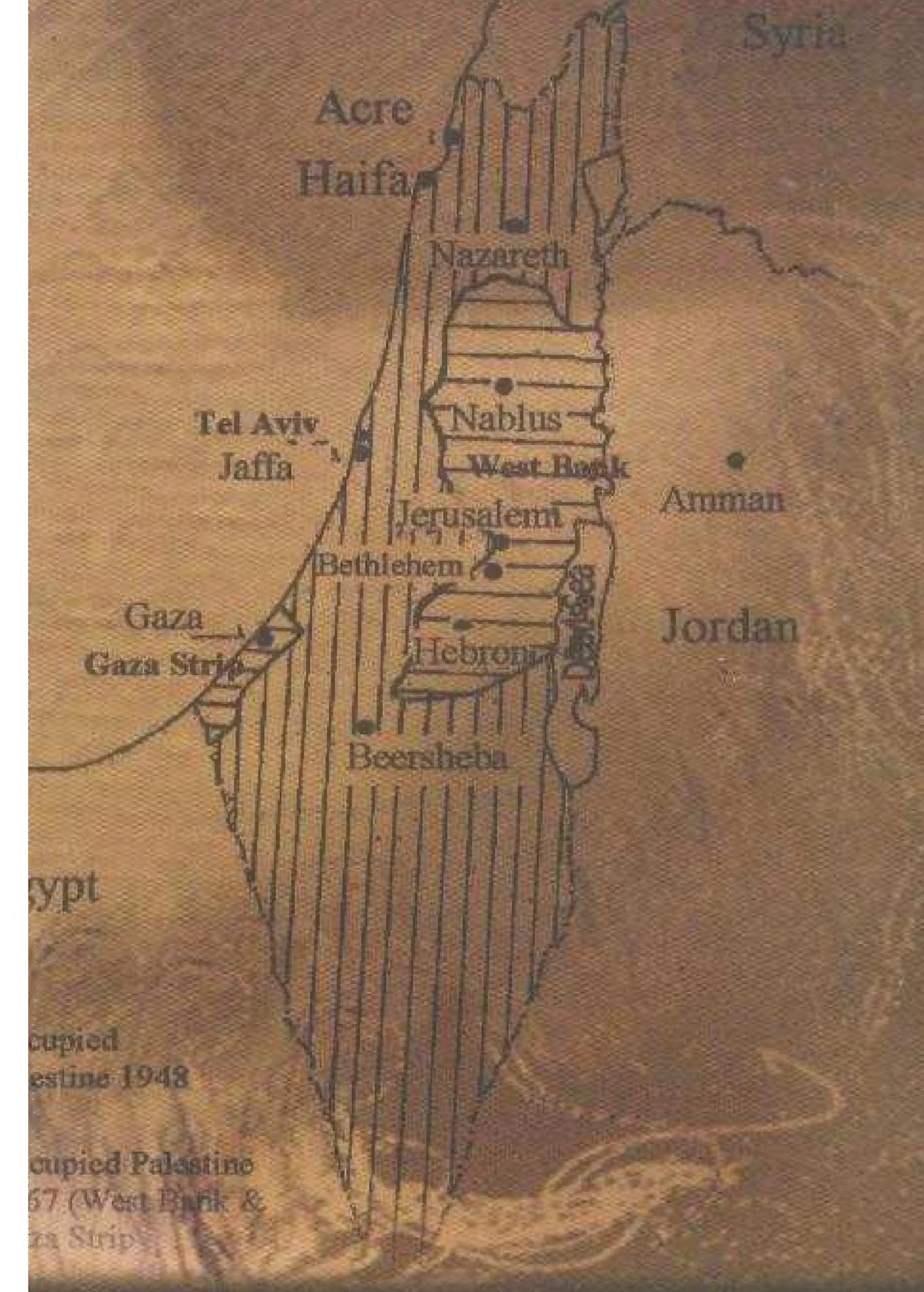
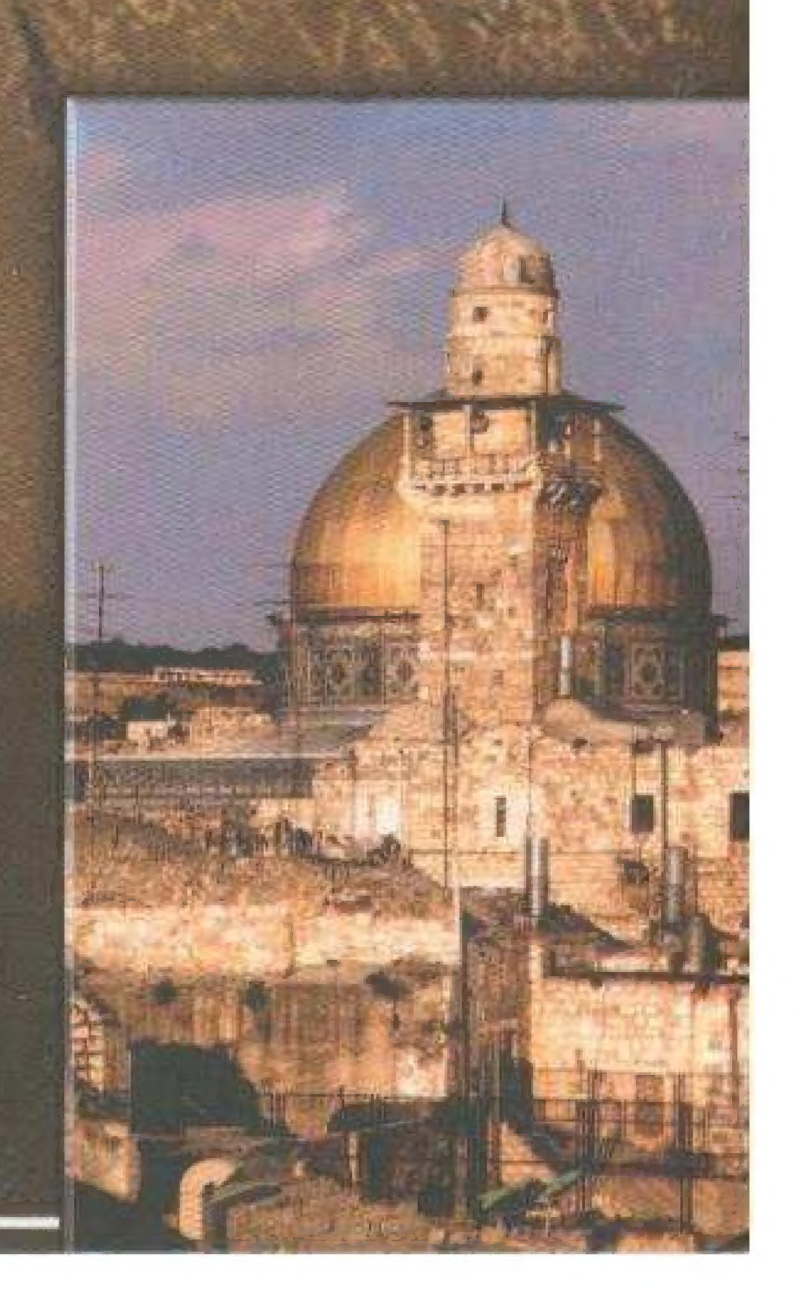
History of Palestine

A Methodical Study of the Palestinian Struggle





Dr. Mohsen Mohammed Saleh

Introduced by Dr. Mohammad Imarah

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A Methodological Study of a Critical Issue

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Contents

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Al-Falah feels indebted to Dr. Mohsen M. Saleh for his enormous efforts and scholarly works to spread awareness on this critical issue. Thanks and appreciation should also be extended to Arab Media Center for its wonderful and valuable publications on the crisis of Palestine and for giving us the chance to publish this precious book.

Al-Falah would like to express thanks to the team who prepared the text for publishing including Dr. Abdelahamid Eliwa, Naseema Mall, Ahmad Ammar, Ni`mah Shahir and Khaled Wady.

Finally, all praise and thanks are due to Allah, without Whose Help and Guidance nothing can be accomplished.

Introduction

Islam strengthens and unites the Muslim community through five principles which are encompassed in the Creed of Islam, the *Shari`ah*, its culture, the integrity of the *Ummah*, and in the beauty of Islam itself.

The solidarity of the *Ummah* was the umbrella, which united all the nations, tribes, races and countries. Thus, the entity of the Muslim *Ummah* became one body. Whenever a part of this body complained of any illness, the rest of it would assist and provide solace. A Muslim sought refuge in his fellow Muslims, and soon he would be supported; whenever the cry of "*Wa Islamah*"[1] was uttered, all Muslims would arise in its wake. Under the shelter of this solidarity, Muslims, over a period of 80 years, managed to conquer other countries and attain a level of superiority that the Romans were not able to achieve in a period of eight centuries. There was a huge difference between Muslims who liberated peoples and others who merely enslaved them. Muslims were renowned for their bravery in vanquishing the fiercest invaders and challenged any amount of danger. They suppressed the crusaders who launched an international, western war against Muslims, which lasted for two centuries (489-690 A.H.) (1096-1291 A.D.). It was the Muslims who

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[1] It is a cry that seeks to touch and revive the sleeping hearts of the Muslim Ummah. It denotes seeking help from the Muslim Ummah. (Translator)

overpowered the Tatars who later embraced Islam and then became one of its most powerful allies.

Along with these victories, the Muslims became the most cultured *Ummah* while the West was suffering from ignorance, superstition and misguidance.

In 897 A.H. (1492 A.C.), European colonialism invaded Muslim lands, starting their malicious schemes when they confiscated Gharnatah (Granada). In 1213 A.H. (1798 A.C.) Egypt, the heart of the Islamic world, was shot by the arrow of Napoleon Bonaparte's campaign. The third calamity came in 1342 A.H. (1924 A.C.) with the collapse of the Islamic Caliphate. This massive trend of colonialism rendered the Islamic world into pieces. Every nation from among the Muslim *Ummah* was forced to fight for its own independence. For the aim of mastering the Islamic world and preventing any kind of revival, the Zionist entity was established in Palestine. It was - and still is - a western cancer that broke down the unity of Muslims and blocked the means of an Islamic revival.

Despite the nationalistic trend that affected the Arab and Muslim westernized intelligentsia, the people of Islamic countries remained steadfast towards the solidarity of the Muslim *Ummah*. The centralization of the Palestinian issue re-established the Islamic bonds among Muslim nations. It represented the various ranges of affiliation and fidelity: Palestinian patriotism, Arab nationalism and Islamic belief. The Palestinian issue was - and still is - the endless torrential fountain for Islamic feeling against the "Zionist- Colonial" challenges that surround al-Aqsa Mosque, al-Quds ash-Sharif, and the whole of Palestine.

The Palestinian issue in regard to the other issues which face Muslims, occupies the same status of al-Aqsa Mosque in regard to other mosques. It is the pivotal point to which all Muslims are to aspire throughout the Islamic world. In this way, they go against patriotism that blocks supporting this issue.

This book outlines and clarifies the key elements of this central issue. It presents the main facts in a political, intellectual and cultural manner. Its pages are considered as the text, which should be comprehended and fully understood by every Muslim. Every honest, noble and impartial human being who seeks justice and truth will comprehend this message. It is the backbone on which the details of the conflict are based. This book was written by Dr. Muhsin Muhammad Salih, and is considered as an important informative source of the most important issue facing Muslims today.

Since the Zionist danger threatens all Muslim territories from Ghana to Indonesia and from the Volga River[1] to the South of the Equator, this issue symbolizes the conflict between the Muslims and the enemies of Islam in any place and at any time. Also, it is the gate of victory for the Muslim *Ummah* over its enemies and against all the challenges of the New World Order. This is the mission of this book. It revives the consciousness, the strategy and the focal point of the Palestinian issue on the national, Islamic, Arab and international level. We sincerely ask Allah to make it

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[1] A river in Western Russia rising in the Valdai Hills northwest of Moscow. It is the longest river in Europe and the main commecial waterway of Russia.

beneficial to all readers, and count it in the balance of whoever bravely proclaims the facts surrounding this issue, and reward its author in the best manner. Surely He is the Best to be asked and the Only One to answer.

Dr. Muhammad `Imarah

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Author's Introduction

All praise be to Allah, the Lord of all creatures; peace and blessings be upon the Master of all Messengers, upon his family, and upon his Companions all.

It really pleases me to offer to my reader this book that is divided into seven complementary chapters to delineate, Allah willing, clearly and comprehensively the picture of the Palestinian Issue.

Undoubtedly, there are thousands of books and studies that dealt with the issue in question from different perspectives. The scientific studies, on one hand, generally cover the issue from one aspect. The methodical studies, on the other hand, examine the issue extensively, comprehensively, and concentratively; but they are few.

The book in hand is classified according to the main outline of the Palestinian issue into seven chapters discussing the land of Palestine, the people of Palestine, Zionism and its thoughts, the Israeli political, demographic, economic and military status, the Palestinian struggle against the Zionist Project including wars, revolutions, and intifadas, and the peace projects and settlements.

The book, indeed, is addressed to highly-educated or cultured people, university students and whoever is concerned with the Palestinian Cause. Furthermore, it fits, Allah willing, as a textbook to be studied by students, since it is written in a simple academic style, with documented data. It, moreover,

relies on the most recent statistics issued about the Palestinian Cause until 2002.

This book is written by an author firmly believes that Palestine is an Islamic and Arab land, the Palestinians are its legitimate sons, and that it is the right of the Muslims and Arabs to strive hard to liberate thoroughly their holy blessed land; the land of Palestine.

Ultimately, we invoke Allah to regard this book as an act of worship, sincerely devoted to pleasing Him. I am fully open-minded to receive any suggestion, advice or instructive criticism.

Mohsen M. Saleh

Chapter One

The Land of Palestine

Palestine is the name of the area located in the southwestern part of Asia; it is bordered by Lebanon from the north, Syria northeast, Jordan east, the Red Sea south, Sinai in Egypt southwest and from the west by the Mediterranean Sea. This area witnessed the first recorded form of civilization in human history in the city of Jericho that was established ten thousand years ago. Ever since, it was inhabited by the Canaanites and the sea immigrants named Philistines who integrated with them later on. It was thereafter invaded by the Romans, the Jews, the Moguls, and the Christian crusaders.

Since the seventh century, most of its population embraced Islam and joined successive Muslim rule until 1917, the year of the collapse of the Ottoman State, when Palestine came under the British mandate that undertook to facilitate the realization of the Zionist dream of creating a Jewish home in Palestine.

In 1948, the British mandate ended and the area became subject to a military dispute between the local Arab population and the immigrant Jews. The dispute resulted in the establishment of the Zionist "State of Israel" over 77% of the area and the displacement of 900,000 local Arabs, who are

the descendants of the early Canaanites, Philistines and the Arab tribes that settled there after the advent of Islam. This was followed by a war in 1967 that resulted in further "Israeli" occupation of more Palestinian land that was at the time under the rule of neighboring Arab countries. Since then, "Israel" maintained direct military occupation of the whole of Palestine and of some areas of Syria, Lebanon and Egypt. But this occupation faced continuous civil and military resistance that brought the area into focus, and reserved for it a significant place in the news and world media.

This book will try to look through all the aspects of this struggle, and introduce to you Palestine and its people, Zionism and the Zionist state and the roots of this over 80 years old dispute.

Palestine, the name

Palestine acquired its name from the Mediterranean immigrants who came from the southern Greek Islands in the 12^{th} century B.C., and were known as the "people of the sea". In the old Egyptian scripts, they were referred to as the P.L.S.T, the N was added later possibly to pluralize the noun; they are referred to as the Philistines. The land, previously known as the Land of Canaan, took the name of the new settlers and came to be known as Palestine. Throughout the centuries of Muslim rule, Palestine had been an integral part of a larger geographical unit, *Bilad Al-Sham* or Greater Syria, as a sub-district or *"Jund"* in the language of that time. The sub-district of Palestine embraced a larger area than the present one. The new boundaries were set during the time of British colonization (1918-1948), and on the bases of the Sykes-Picot agreement between France and Britain that divided the territories of the disintegrated Ottoman State. The

final borders with Syria and Lebanon were set following a Franco-British agreement in 1920, while the borders with Trans-Jordan were fixed by the British High Commissioner in 1922, and those with Egypt were set in 1908 by the Ottomans and the Egyptian Khedive. Since then, Palestine included areas west of the Jordan River, south of the Mount Lebanon.

Geography and Climate

The total area of Palestine is 27,009 km^2, including 704 km^2 of water surface that is composed of Al-Hula Lake, Tiberias Lake and half of the Dead Sea. Palestine is generally divided into four geographic zones:

1. **The coastal area:** it is a plain land laying along the Mediterranean from north to south; its highest altitude is 180 meters above sea level. This is one of the most fertile areas of Palestine as it enjoys a Mediterranean climate with full four seasons. It is ideal for growing fruits and flowers by which it is known until today.
2. **The mountainous area:** it is located to the east of the coastal areas and stands parallel to it; the highest altitude reaches 1208 meters in Mount Al-Jarmaq (Meron) in northern Palestine. This area is generally colder than the coastal one, but it still enjoys a Mediterranean climate. Despite its rough topography, the area is ideal for growing grains, beans, figs, olives and grapes; and is widely used for herding.
3. **Al-Ghour (the Rift Valley):** it is also known also as the Jordan Valley, as the Jordan River divides it into eastern and western parts, in Jordan and Palestine consecutively. Al-Ghour is a fertile land ideal for growing vegetables, fruits and dates. This valley is the lowest dry point on

earth; it reaches 395 meters beneath sea level to the point where the Jordan River influxes into the Dead Sea. The Valley then continues south down to the Red Sea with a total length of 460 km^2. The Dead Sea is the saltiest sea on earth and does not contain any form of marine life. Al-Ghour is generally hot and relatively dry all year round.

4. **The desert area:** it occupies Southern Palestine, and is known as Al-Naqab (Negev) Desert with Beer Al-Sabe` (Beersheba) as its main oasis. Al-Naqab occupies almost half the area of Palestine; it covers the area between Al-Khalil (Hebron) east and Gaza west and extends to the northern coast of the Red Sea. Al-Naqab is hot and dry with some wind-driven sands and few oases.

Palestine is thus unique geographically with four different climates, with the lowest point on earth and mountains of 1200m altitude above sea level, with lakes and seas among which one is known for its highest salt concentration that left it with no marine life. All these features are assembled in a small piece of land that connects Asia and Africa, and comprises no more than 27,009 km^2.

Main Cities

Since the establishment of the first city, Jericho in 8000 B.C., Palestine has been a center of civilizations that extended along its geographical zones. Most of the civilizational activities were concentrated in the coast and the mountains, and to a lesser extent in the Jordan Valley, and the least were in the desert that had been inhabited by Bedouins thousands of years ago. The main cities of the coast are Yafa (Jaffa), `Akka (Acre), Haifa, Gaza and Isdod, while those of the mountainous area are Al-Quds (Jerusalem), Al-Khalil

(Hebron), Ramallah, Nablus, Bethlehem, Nazareth and Safad. The main city of the Jordan Valley is Jericho and that of the desert is Beer Al-Sabe` (Beersheba).

Palestine in Islam

The Holy Land

Over three billion people around the world, i.e. more than half of the world's population, believe that Palestine, or at least some part of it, is holy; no other land on earth is held holy by such a huge number of people. For all the three Abrahamic religions (Islam, Christianity and Judaism), and to some other sects as well, Palestine is a holy land that houses some of the major holy shrines.

For Jews, Palestine is the land in which Prophet Jacob (Ya`quob) (Peace be upon him), the grandfather of the tribes of Israel, lived with his children; it is the land to which they escaped with Moses (Musa) from the Pharaoh, and in which they lived under the righteous rule of Prophets David (Dawud) and his son Solomon (Sulayman), (Peace be upon them). In this land they established their kingdoms, Israel and Judah, which were later on destroyed by the Assyrians and the Babylonians.

For the Christians, Palestine is the land where Jesus of Nazareth (Isa) was born, around it he preached and conveyed his message to the world, and in it, Christians believe, he died on the cross for the salvation of humankind and was resurrected. Christian shrines narrate this story from the beginning until the end in their names: Church of *Al-Mahd* in Bethlehem, his birthplace "The Church of Nativity", and

Church of *Qiyamah* "The Church of the Holy Sepulcher (Resurrection)", referring to Christ's believed resurrection.

For Muslims, as Muslims believe in the Prophets of the Judaic and Christian religions, all the above are among the reasons why Muslims hold Palestine as holy. Ya`qoub (Jacob), Yusuf (Joseph), Dawud (David), Sulayman (Solomon), Yusha` and `Isa (Jesus) are all Prophets who led the struggle of good against evil, and Islam is the complete and final form of what they preached. For Muslims, Palestine is the land of Prophets; among the Prophets mentioned in the Qur'an and Sunnah 14 lived, preached, and died there, or passed through it. (Besides those mentioned above are: Ibrahim, Lut, Isma`il, Ishaq, Shu`ayb, Zakariyya, Yahya, and Muhammad (Peace be upon them all).

Al-Aqsa Mosque

The first *Qibla* (the direction to which Muslims pray), stands in the heart of this land, in Al-Quds (Jerusalem). It is the third holy shrine of Islam preceded by *Al-Haram* in Mecca and the Prophet's Mosque in Medina (now located in Saudi Arabia). A prayer in Al-Aqsa Mosque is equal to 500 prayers, as the Prophet said. It is the second mosque built on earth after Al-Ka`ba in Mecca.

It is from this land that Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) escalated to the heavens (*Mi`raj*), after he reached there from Mecca on his night journey (*Isra'*); since then Muslims have called it: "the gate to the heavens". On this journey, Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) led the prophets in a night prayer in Al-Aqsa Mosque. This was an honor given to this land and to Muslims, indicating that from then on the leadership and promotion of faith in the whole

world became their responsibility. It was during this journey that the five daily prayers were ordained.

Palestine is also described as holy and blessed in the Qur'an and Sunnah. It is the land of Islam in the time of turbulence, and those who live in it and around it are considered *Mujahideen* (strivers in the Way of God). In some *hadiths*, the victorious and righteous group of Muslims live in Palestine and around it; Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) said: *"There shall be a group of my followers who stick to the right and never go astray irrespective of that they may face"*, the companions asked: "Where are they?" He replied: *"In Bait-ul Maqdis (Jerusalem) and its vicinity."*

Historically, many famous Muslim scholars originated, preached or lived in Palestine for some time; amongst them are names that were influential in forming the Muslim mentality. E.g. in historical sequence, Raja' ibn Hayat Al-Kindi, Rooh ibn Zinbac, Malik ibn Deenar, Imam Al-Awza`i, Sufyan Al-Thawri, Ibn Shihab Al-Zuhri, Imam Al-Shafi`i, Ibrahim ibn Adham, Al-Laith ibn Sa`d, Abu Bakr Al-Jerjanee, Ibn Qudama al-Maqdisee. Other famous figures in this group were Abdulhameed ibn Yahya (known also as Abdulhamid the Writer because he established the art of formal writing and documentation in Arabic), the chemist Khalid ibn Yazeed Al-Umawee, and the famous military leader and conqueror of Andalusia (Iberian Peninsula) Musa ibn Nusair.

Whose Land is it?

A Disputed Land

The fame of Palestine comes from the over 80 year dispute between its local Arab population and the immigrant Zionist Jews who strove and later managed to establish their own political entity, the "State of Israel", expelling and depriving the indigenous population. Zionism in brief is a political ideology that believes in the establishment of a "national" home for the Jewish people in Palestine. It works to achieve its aim through all possible means, with violence on top of the agenda. It validates its belief and actions with certain religious arguments derived mainly from Judaism and historical arguments that are based mainly on the Old Testament. However, this neither implies that all Jews are Zionists nor that all Zionists are Jews. There are some non-Zionist and even anti-Zionist Jews and there are many non-Jewish Zionists, most of whom are Protestant Christians. On the path to achieve their goals, the Zionists fought six wars, killing and displacing Palestinians inside or even outside Palestine, who escaped to safety in Lebanon. However, the Zionist view does not consider those killed and displaced as victims; on the contrary, it maintains that its actions are legal and ethical, defending the "undisputable" right of the Jews in their homeland. Let us, now examine this so called "undisputable right".

Zionist Religious Claims

As the chosen people, God rewarded the Jews with the blessed land, the land of milk and honey, in which they established their great righteous kingdoms from which they were expelled by the Assyrians. It is time now for the Jews to return to this land that was given to them by a divine decree; it is time for them to end their miserable, two millenniums Diaspora. This rhetoric validates itself with verses from the Old Testament like:

"...The Lord said to Abraham: Leave your land, your tribe, the house of your father and go to the land I am leading you to ... So Abraham went as the Lord told him ... Then, they came to the land of Canaan ... and the Lord appeared before Abraham and said: 'To your progeny I give this land'...." (The Book of Creation, 12/1), and: *"...And (Abraham) lived in the land of Canaan. Then the Lord said to him: 'Raise up your eyes and from the place where you were, look around you to the north, south, east and west, because all the land that your eyes can see I give to you and to your progeny for ever'...."* (The Book of Creation, 13/14).

The Old Testament also includes: *"... The Lord made a covenant with Abraham saying to your progeny I give this land, from the river of Egypt to the great river; the Euphrates..."* (The Book of Creation, 5/15).

However, it should be clear to anyone of intellect that this pledge is valid only to its believers; hence, Jews do not have the right to force the local Muslim and Christian population, who do not share this belief, to surrender to it; had they believed in such claims there would have been no dispute from the beginning. Religious claims then are not able to

validate anything as long as they are acceptable to one side only, which is the foreign and immigrant side.

Additionally, the Prophets of the Children of Israel (Such as Moses, Joshua, David, and Solomon (peace be upon them all) endeavored to house their followers (i.e. the Jews) in the sacred land. Thereupon, under the pretext of having their Prophetic heritage, the Jews alleged that Palestine is their own.

On the other hand, the great indigenous Muslim majority believes that:

First: Muslims are the legitimate heirs of all Prophets who led the struggle of monotheism on this land, the belief in the prophethood of those Prophets is an indispensable part of the Muslim faith, thus, by this logic, the land is theirs. According to the Qur'an, all Prophets were Muslims in faith, hence, Muslims are their most legitimate heirs because their relationship with the Prophets is one of faith, not of language or race; Prophets belong to those who share them the faith, i.e. the Muslims. Here we quote the Qur'anic verse proving these points,

> ﴿*Ibrahim (Abraham) was neither a Jew nor a Christian, but he was a true Muslim Hanifa (Islamic Monotheism - to worship none but Allah Alone) and he was not of Al-Mushrikun. Verily, among mankind who have the best claim to Ibrahim (Abraham) are those who followed him, and this Prophet (Muhammad) and those who have believed (Muslims). And Allah is the Wali (Protector and Helper) of the believers.*﴾
>
> (Al `Imran 67-68)

They believe that the existing Torah of the Jews of today, is a distorted one that was rewritten by the Jewish rabbis to suit their goals and needs, therefore it is viewed very skeptically.

Second: Muslims, however, believe that this land was once given to the followers of Moses. This belief comes from what Qur'an told:

> ﴿*(Moses said): O my people! Enter the Holy Land which God hath assigned unto you, and turn not back ignominiously, for then will ye be overthrown, to your own ruin. They said: O Moses! In this land are a people of exceeding strength: Never shall we enter it until they leave it: if (once) they leave, then shall we enter. They said: O Moses! While they remain there, never shall we be able to enter, to the end of time. Go thou and thy Lord, and fight ye two, while we sit here (and watch)"... "Moses said: O my Lord! I have power only over myself and my brother; so separate us from this rebellious people! Allah said: 'Therefore will the land be out of their reach for forty years: In a distraction will they wander through the land: But sorrow thou not over these Rebellious people*﴾
>
> (Al-Ma'idah: 21-26)

God assigned the land to Jews on condition that they constitute a leading monotheistic paradigm based on the revealed teachings, but they did exactly the contrary, and the agreement therefore is null and void. Since this condition was not fulfilled, God sent His Messengers to other people so that they promote the faith to humanity in a better way than the children of Israel did. And from that time, the right to the holy land went to those who lead this mission of creating the

leading example based on the divine revealed teachings, i.e. the Muslims. Indeed, Jews themselves had admitted that they no longer deserved the land because of their deviation and sins, this was said by their Prophet Armiah to Nebuchadnezzar and the Chaldeans. He said, *"Alas, sinful nation, a people laden with iniquity, a brood of evildoers, children who are corruptors! They have forsaken the LORD, they have provoked to anger, The Holy One of Israel, They have turned away backward".* (The Book of Isaiah, 1.4) In other parts, Scriptures adds, *"The earth is also defiled under its inhabitants, because they have transgressed the laws, changed the ordinance, broken the everlasting covenant."* (The Book of Isaiah, 24: 4-5.)

Third: Even if we endorse the belief of the Jews that the land was given to Ibrahim and his children, then the Arabs have a right to the land as well because Isma`il "Ishmael", the second son of Abraham, is one of their great grandfathers. Thus, according to the same logic, they have equal right to that of the Jews.

Fourth: For Muslims, the Qur'an has explained clearly the meaning of choosing the progeny of Ibrahim for leadership:

> ﴿*...God said: I will make thee an Imam to the Nations. Ibrahim pleaded: And also (Imams) from my offspring! He answered: But My Promise is not within the reach of evil doers [tyrants]*﴾
>
> (Al-Baqarah: 124)

The condition for this leadership is not to do evil things, but, on the contrary, the Zionist Jews are using it as an excuse to kill, displace, torture and oppress, as if God chose them to freely commit evil.

Zionist Historical Claims

Based on the stories narrated in the Torah, the Zionist Jews claim that they are the indigenous people of Palestine and that this land belongs only to them; everybody who entered this land came after them and is considered a colonizer of the land of Israel; he deserves then to be expelled for taking a land that is not his. Many historical studies were directed to support this contention; but they are far from being academic and are value driven as they disregard a huge amount of historical evidence that will be discussed here.

First: Bearing in mind that Prophet Musa (Moses) came in the 13th century B.C. it is easy to refute these claims. Indeed, the great history of Palestine starts far before this age. Traces found in Palestine show that it was inhabited since the early Stone Age (500 000-14,000 B.C.) and continued to be inhabited in the middle Stone Age (14,000-8,000 B.C.) when the first known civilization in human history, the Natufian Civilization, started. Natufians took their name from the caves in the area north of present day Al-Quds (Jerusalem); in 8000 B.C. they established Jericho, which was the first form of human settlement, i.e. the first city in history. The recorded history of Palestine started with the migration of Semitic groups from the Arabian Peninsula. These groups included the Amorites, the Canaanites; and the Jebusites and the Phoenicians, who were all sub-groups of the Canaanites.

The Canaanites, and to a lesser degree the Jebusites, settled in ,large numbers in the Mountains of Palestine; the Phoenicians settled in Northern Palestine and Lebanon; and the Amorites settled in Jordan. The Canaanites became the dominant population group of Palestine and consequently the land was named after them (The Land of Canaan), a name

used even in the Torah. The Canaanites built more than 200 cities and villages; including Shechem (known now as Nablus), Akka (Acre), Haifa, Asdud, Beer Al-Sabe` (Beersheba) and Beit Lahm (Bethlehem). Excavations in the sites of the ancient Syrian civilization of Ugarit, which was affected to a large extent by the Canaanites, discovered a huge amount of cuneiform inscriptions that revealed a lot about the Canaanite religion and mythology. They were stunningly similar to the mythology of the Torah, leading to the conclusion that the Jewish rabbis depended much on the Canaanite literature in writing the Torah, but attributed it to themselves or even to God. Indeed, the Temple of Solomon, mentioned in the Torah, is very much similar to the House of Bacal (built by the Canaanites in the same city in 2600 B.C.); Bacal was the Canaanite god of fertility.

Second: Prophet Ibrahim (Abraham) came to this land around the year 1900 B.C.; in narrating this story the Torah called the area "The Land of Canaan", admitting the existence of a civilization on this land prior even to the coming of Prophet Ibrahim, the great grandfather of Arabs and Jews. His grandson, Ya`qoob (Jacob or Israel), from whom Jews descended, migrated with his children from the Land of Canaan to Egypt, where they stayed until 1250 B.C. in which Moses took them to the Holy Land.

Third: The History of the Jews in Palestine started during this period, between 1250-1000 B.C., but they managed only to settle in few areas, around Al-Quds and in the north. From that time, the reign of Prophets Dawud (David) and Sulayman (Solomon) started, marking the real beginning of Jewish reign over Palestine. The reign of the two Prophets lasted only for 80 years (1004-923 B.C.).

Fourth: Following the death of Sulayman(Solomon), the 12 Jewish tribes engaged in a dispute over who will take the throne:

The Kingdom of Israel (923-721 B.C.): 10 of the Jewish tribes did not support Rehoboam, the son of Sulaiman, and preferred to have Yeroboam from the tribe of Ephraim as their king. They established the Kingdom of Israel, with Shechem, Terza and finally Samaria as its capital, which had, however, progressively disintegrated by a wave of incursions and invasions, until it finally collapsed at the hands of the Assyrians under Sarjon II. The latter expelled the Jews of these ten tribes and took them to the areas of Iraq, Kurdistan and Persia where they integrated with the local people and remained there.

The Kingdom of Judah: (923-586 B.C.): the remaining two tribes supported Rehoboam and established the Kingdom of Judah, with Jerusalem as its capital. It lasted longer than its counterpart, but was weak and subjected to strong foreign influence. The rulers of Assyria and Egypt invaded Jerusalem frequently, but the kingdom continued until the time of Nebuchadnezzar, the king of Babylon, who destroyed it and enslaved 40,000 Jews, while the remaining Jewish population escaped to Egypt.

Bearing the above in mind, it is clear that the Jewish reign in Palestine continued for four centuries if we include the longest interval, during which they never managed to control the whole area of Palestine, with continuous declination and increasing foreign influence until they eventually vanished. Even during the times of their greatest kings, Prophets Dawud (David) and Sulayman(Solomon), the Jews did not have full

control over the whole area of Palestine, the southwestern coastal areas almost from Yafa (Jaffa) to Rafah.

Fifth: Palestine was then incorporated into the Persian Empire (539-332 B.C.). Cyrus II, the Persian Emperor, allowed the Jews to leave Babylon to Palestine. Few of them left and settled in Jerusalem, where they were allowed to establish their autonomy over a radius of 20 km^2 around the city (around 2.8% only of the area of contemporary Palestine). The rest remained in their new home, Babylon, and seemed to have settled there permanently.

In 332 B.C., Alexander the Macedonian conquered Palestine which was subjected to Hellenistic rule. Despite continuous wars over the area between the generals of Alexander, the Jewish autonomy remained untouched in the early Hellenistic rule under the Ptolemies, the rulers of Egypt, who managed to control the area from 332 B.C. until 198 B.C. However, things changed when the Seleucids, the rulers of Syria, defeated the Ptolemies and captured the areas they controlled in Syria and Palestine in 213 B.C. By 198 B.C. the Seleucids forced the Jews to abide to Greek traditions and faith, but they later revolted and once more gained a kind of autonomy over Jerusalem that fluctuated between strength and weakness according to the hegemony of the surrounding powers.

Subsequently, the Romans controlled the area in 63 B.C. They kept the Jewish autonomy over Jerusalem intact until 6 A.D., when they assumed direct control over it. The Jews revolted between 66-70 A.D., but the Romans brutally suppressed this revolution and destroyed Jerusalem and its new temple built by Herod. The Jews revolted again and for the last time in 132-135 A.D., the Romans responded more

aggressively aiming to end any possible future instability to be brought by the Jews. They destroyed the city that they replaced by a new one built over the area and called it Aelia Capitolina. They placed the statue of Jupiter, the Roman God, over the ruins of the Temple of Herod. By this time, the effective Jewish presence in Palestine came to an end.

Sixth: From that time, 135 A.D. and until the beginning of the twentieth century, the Jews did not have any form of physical ties with Palestine or Jerusalem. However, they claim that their spiritual ties with Jerusalem have always been maintained, and that they would have gone there, had the political conditions allowed them to do so. However, this claim seems to be untrue and exaggerated, especially when we bear the following facts:

When the Persian Emperor Cyrus II allowed the Jews back from Babylon, only a minority returned, while the rest continued to stay in their places of deportation. Historians note also that the number of Jews who stayed in Jerusalem before its destruction in the first century was less than one third of the total population of Jews at that time, (though their autonomy reached the form of a small independent kingdom between 141-27 B.C.). Even today, 60% of the world's Jews live outside the Zionist state, and refuse to migrate to "the homeland", especially those who enjoy prosperous economic conditions in the U.S. and Western Europe.

Seventh: Indeed, going back to Palestine was religiously prohibited until the beginning of the twentieth century and the emergence of Zionism. Jews believed that God had deprived them of living in Palestine because of their evil deeds, and they can only go back when the Messiah, their savior, comes and guides them to good again. Any Jew who called for going

back to Palestine to establish a Jewish community there was considered a heterodox.

Eighth: In 395 A.D., the Roman Empire was divided into two parts; Eastern Byzantine with Constantinople as its capital, and Western Rome with Rome as its capital. Palestine remained under continuous Byzantine rule except for a few years when Persia captured the area (610-624 A.D.). The Byzantines maintained indirect rule through their agents in the area, the Arab Ghassani tribes, who migrated from Yemen and embraced Christianity in the fourth century. No massive migration took place from Europe, as the Romans wanted this area to be their frontline during wars and a source of wealth, thus the local demography remained almost the same.

Ninth: Muslims, under the leadership of the Caliph Umar, opened the area in the year 636 A.D./15 H. Umar had personally taken the keys of Jerusalem from its Patriarch and undertook to grant the people freedom of religion, and the right to keep their churches in the famous Covenant of Umar (*Al-`Uhda Al-`Umariyyah*). The city witnessed no bloodshed this time. Since then, most of the population, who descended from the Canaanites and Philistines, embraced Islam. During the Umayyad Caliphate, the Dome of the Rock, one of the finest pieces of architecture on earth, was built on the rock from which Prophet Muhammad (peace been upon him) started his journey to heaven (*Mi`raj*). The local population integrated with the immigrants who came from the Arabian Peninsula, and adopted their Arabic language.

Tenth: The continuous Muslim rule was interrupted by the Crusades. The Crusaders managed to occupy Al-Quds (Jerusalem) in 1099 A.D.; they inflicted the city with the worst bloodshed that it had ever witnessed. They established

"the Latin Kingdom of Jerusalem" that continued for 88 years until it was crushed by the sword of Salahuddin Al-Ayyubi (Saladin). After the battle of Hittin in July 1187, Salahuddin marched to Al-Quds (Jerusalem) and returned it to the Muslims on 2 October 1187 A.D.

For 1200 years, Palestine was inhabited and ruled by Muslims. For the first time since the time of the early Canaanites, this land was ruled and inhabited by one and the same people. The Muslim era was the longest in the history of Palestine and was only interrupted by the brutal Crusades. Until 1918, followers of the three faiths, Islam, Christianity and Judaism, experienced peace and harmony in Palestine for most of this era, thanks to the accommodating Muslim rule.

Eleventh: Even if we assume that Palestine belonged to the Jews as a race, there is no evidence that today's Jews are the direct descendants of the ancient Jews. On the contrary, historical evidence suggests that they are not. Most of the Jews living in today's world are descendents of the Khazar Jews, a Tartars-Turkish tribe that lived in the Caucuses around the area of the Caspian Sea. Its king, Bulan, became a Jew, probably for strategic reasons, in 740 A.D., and the whole tribe adopted Judaism. Their kingdom was destroyed by a Russo-Byzantine alliance, and the Khazar Jews dispersed in Russia and Eastern Europe. 90% of today's Jews, known as the Ashkenazim, come from this origin. Consequently, if the Jews of our days ask to live in the land of their ancestors, it is to southern Russia where they should go, not Palestine.

Twelfth: The modern rule of the Zionists has been based on violence and tyranny; it displaced others and deprived them of their basic rights. Even if the land belonged historically to the Jews, it is by no mean acceptable that they

deprive any other people from their right, especially since those people are not responsible for the miserable Jewish plight.

Conclusion: In the long and rich Palestinian history, the Jewish history measures like an hour to a week. The Jewish tribes were nothing more than invaders who tried to establish their rule over a nation that is rich materially and culturally. They ended up destroying the land and claiming its culture to be theirs. Commenting on the Jewish history in Palestine after the destruction of their two kingdoms, the famous historian G.H. Wales records in his concise history that "The life of the Hebrews in Palestine was like the life of a man who insists to live in the middle of a busy road so he is always struck by vehicles".

The Canaanites and Philistines, who accepted Christianity during the Byzantine era, and subsequently Islam, are the same people who continued to inhabit the area until 1948, and for the last 4500 years. Thus, they are the legitimate autochthons of this land. Any forceful occupation of their land and denial of their rights should not be legitimized under any conditions whatsoever because it is the basic right of a nation to determine its fate. Due to Zionist terrorism, and until 2002, there were 4.8 million Palestinians living as refugees around the world and 1.6 million in refugee camps in the West Bank and Gaza Strip, most of whom are direct descendents of the Canaanites and the Philistines who had once given this land its fame as the land of milk and honey.

How Was the Land Lost?

You may now wonder, since the Palestinians are the legitimate owners of the land, as proved in the previous section, how was the land taken from them? And why did they give up the land of their grandfathers? Why did they not hold on to their land, and the whole problem would not have then existed? Indeed, the Zionist version of the story tries to capitalize on these "unanswered" questions. To legitimize its continuous occupation of the land and the deprivation of the Palestinians from their rights, Zionism claims that the Palestinians left their land willingly, so, they do not deserve it anymore. However, before we pass any judgment and blame the victims, let us consider the following facts.

Before 1948: The World Zionist Organization (WZO est. 1897) utilized all its material, political and human resources to achieve its long cherished goal, namely, "to create for the Jewish people a home in Palestine secured by public law". The leader of the organization, Theodore Hertzl, tried to offer financial aid to the ailing Ottoman State in return for facilitating Jewish immigration, but Sultan Abdul Hamid II refused. For many different reasons, the Zionists had, however, managed to increase their political influence in Britain, the U.S., Post-Ottoman Modern Turkey and in many other countries as well. At the same time, the deteriorating world conditions, especially in Eastern Europe, triggered a huge number of oppressed Jews to migrate in search for a better life. The World Zionist Organization took advantage of

this development and allocated huge funds to buy land in Palestine and encourage the Jews to migrate there in huge numbers.

In the beginning of the 19th century, the number of the Jews in Palestine did not exceed 5000; mostly professionals and merchants who owned virtually no land there. But by 1918, the Zionists managed to acquire 42,000 hectares of state lands (1.56% of the area of Palestine) that they got through bribing the administrative personnel of the fading Ottoman State.

In 1918, and after the crushing defeat of the Ottomans in World War I, Palestine was subjected to British colonization. Consequently, Britain put into action its undertaking to the Jews to help them to have a home in Palestine in recognition of their support to the Allies war effort and the role that they played to convince the U.S. government to join the Allies against Germany. The Jews got the promise, known as the Balfour Declaration in 1917, and the U.S. joined the war.

Under British colonization, special laws were issued to facilitate Jewish immigration and acquisition of land in Palestine; and Britain allowed free influx of people, materials and weapons to the Jews. It also granted them autonomy over their colonies and allowed them to form a special colony police force. Meanwhile huge taxes were imposed on the local Arabs, whose movement was restricted and they were not allowed to have weapons or to acquire lands. Notwithstanding these facilities to the Jews, and corresponding pressure on the Palestinians, the former managed by 1948 to own just 180,000 hectares, around 6.67% of the land at that time, that they got mainly from the rich feudal class, mostly Lebanese and Syrian families. Until

today, Palestinian farmers have a very high regard and affection to their lands, making any sale of it tantamount to death.

The British had, however, relatively restricted Jewish immigration and acquisition of land after the great Palestinian revolt, but this lasted for a few years only.

The United Nations, in an attempt to guard against any military dispute that may rise over Palestine after the expiry of the British mandate there in 1948, proposed a partition plan that suggested the establishment of two states in Palestine: One Jewish over 54% of the land of Palestine, including most of the coastal area and the fertile lands, and another Arab on 45% of the land, leaving the area of Al-Quds (Jerusalem) (1%) under international control. Bearing in mind that the Arabs had then constituted 68.3% of the population of Palestine and owned 93.5% of its land, while the Jews, who were mostly foreign immigrants, formed the rest of the population, the partition plan was indeed extremely unfair to the Arabs, who had logically outrightly rejected it.

After 1948: In November 1947 the U.N. issued its partition plan, which triggered confrontations throughout the country, and on 15 May 1948, the British mandate ended. The Zionists declared the independent "State of Israel", and war intensified between the Zionist gangs, who formed colonial police forces, and the local Arab population. This war, which witnessed some of the worst massacres after the world wars era, resulted in the Zionist acquisition of 77% of Palestinian land, over which they established their state. The remaining Palestinian land came under the control of neighboring Arab countries. The West Bank was annexed to Jordan and the Gaza Strip was put under Egyptian administration.

During this war, the newly established "Israeli" army, composed of Zionist gangs, became the official army of the new state, and it applied an ethnic cleansing plan called "Plan Dalet". By this plan, the "Israeli" army used its military might against civilians who lived inside the areas of the newly-independent state because they disturbed the geographic and demographic continuity of the land. The "Israeli" army committed around 34 massacres and destroyed over 400 Palestinian villages, killing 13,000 civilians and forcing around 726,000 out of their homes. Those who were not killed were forced under threats of rifles and artillery to leave. When the "Israeli" state was declared, its Jewish population was around 700,000 and its Arab population, or those who managed to remain at home, were 156,000. The establishment of this Jewish state was thus impossible had it not been for this large scale ethnic cleansing. "Israel" had definitely needed this war, and the subsequent expulsion of the Arabs, in order to establish itself. It was therefore not the interest of the local population to leave, and the whole Zionist version of the 1948 war falls apart with its fraudulent logic. The U.N. partition plan, adopted in resolution 181, stipulated that the proposed Jewish State should have 498,000 Jews and 497,000 Palestinian Arabs. This clearly meant that it could not be a Jewish state, especially if we consider the high rate of population growth among the Palestinians, around 10% at that time. On the contrary, it was definitely going to be an Arab state with Jewish minority in no time.

In 1967 another war erupted between "Israel" and three of its Arab neighbors, which resulted in a catastrophic Arab defeat. "Israel" occupied the remaining 23% of the land of Palestine, and captured Sinai from Egypt and the Golan Heights from Syria.

However, throughout this continuous “Israeli” aggression and violation of human rights, the Palestinian resistance never stopped and the Palestinian people never gave up their rights.

How much can the Peace Process give back to Palestinians? Since the 77% of Palestine that was occupied by the Zionists in 1948 became the territory of the internationally recognized “State of Israel” the current peace process, which is based on United Nations resolutions, is only concerned with the remaining 23%, that is the West Bank and the Gaza Strip. The above 77% of Palestine is thus non-negotiable and its 3.4 million people, who have been living in inhumane conditions outside Palestine since 1948, (let alone those 1.6 millions living inside Palestine) are totally omitted from the peace agenda as well!

In addition, until March 2001, and after 8 years of bargaining, the Palestinian National Authority (PNA) had full control only over 17% of the West Bank (1000km^2) and 55% of the Gaza Strip (200 km^2), while about 25% of the West Bank is placed under partial civil control. All in all, the PNA had real control over 1200 km^2, or 4.4% of the total area of Historical Palestine. In their most “generous” mood, the “Israelis” offered the PNA 90% of the West Bank, but excluded Al-Quds (Jerusalem) which they insisted to be the permanent capital of “Israel”.

Table showing land gained throughout the 8 years of peace negotiations:

Location	**Total Area** (In Km^2)	**Area Gained** (In km^2, only areas under full control - area A- are calculated)	**Ratio** (Out of the total are of the mentioned location)
Gaza Strip	363	200	55%
West Bank	5876	1000	17%
Conventional Palestine (as defined by U.N. Security Council Resolutions i.e. West Bank and Gaza Strip)	6239	1200	19.3%
Historical Palestine (As defined by the boundaries drawn by British colonization)	27009	1200	4.4%

Land under Occupation

In order to establish their new state, the Zionists carried out massive operations of disguise, reconstruction and reallocation to change the identity of the land, and prepare it to accommodate the new "owners" who flocked from all around the world. Excavations and construction of ancient-like sites started in order to create a history for the Jews in their *home*. Both the lands occupied in 1948 and 1967, suffered, to varying degrees, similar acts of distortion.

Land Occupied in 1948

Among the first steps taken by the new "Israeli" administration was the establishment of an institution called "The Guard of Absentees' Property". In the Zionist dictionary, the task of this "guard" was to distribute the properties of the displaced Palestinians among the new Jewish immigrants. Houses and lands were given to them. Since most of the villages were not of use to the Zionists, who had established their own communal farming communities (the Mushavim and the Kibbutzim) they were destroyed so that no Arab will ever return under any circumstances. The property of the Palestinians who remained in their homes was, moreover, usually confiscated to be used for "public interest".

Besides, the holy places were subjected to uncivilized activities and inequitable development deliberately undertaken to keep the Arab areas poor and underdeveloped.

Land Occupied in 1967

This land is subjected to almost the same aggressive policies, though not officially declared as parts of the "Israeli" territory. The sanctity of the Holy Muslim and Christian sites has not been respected. The Mosque of Ibrahim in Al-Khalil "Hebron" was initially partially closed, and a large portion of it was turned into a Jewish temple. Though there is no legal restriction on the entrance of Muslims to this site, they face all kinds of humiliation at the hands of the "Israeli" soldiers who are stationed there under the pretext of protecting Jewish worshipers. The western wall of Al-Aqsa Mosque has been called the "Wailing Wall" based on the Jewish claim that it is part of the Temple of Solomon, that had allegedly been located exactly under Al-Aqsa Mosque. Many lands were confiscated under the guise that they were sites of ancient demolished Jewish shrines, and the properties of the Palestinians, present or absent, were confiscated to build Jewish settlements and their public utilities. Many fertile lands were declared as closed military areas, or "natural reserves", to prevent the Palestinians from their economic utilization.

Another dimension of "Israeli" violations in the 1967 occupied land was in the environmental field. Since the "Israelis" do not officially consider these lands an integral part of their state, and proposed them for some form of Palestinian self-rule, no effort is made to preserve their environment. Wastewater of the Zionist settlements is dumped directly in Palestinian farming lands, sometimes even in Palestinian wells, and unfair allocation of water resources is practiced. Meanwhile, to deprive the Palestinian farmers from their major source of income, the "Israeli" authorities annually uproot a huge number of trees, even so during the times of peace talks.

Since the signature of the Declaration of Principles that initiated the peace process in 1993 and until August 2001, more than 70,000 acres of land were confiscated, and around 282,000 trees were uprooted in the West Bank alone.

To add insult to injury, "Israel" follows the traction of house demolition as a retaliatory weapon against the civil population in the West Bank and Gaza. During the first intifada, houses of Palestinian activists were demolished to deter them and incite their own families against them. During the second intifada, and in an attempt to minimize "Israeli" causalities, all Palestinian houses that were suspected of hosting activists or militants were demolished or bombed, then comes the shameless confirmation! From the beginning of the intifada until the beginning of August 2002, the "Israeli" army had completely demolished 616 Palestinian houses and left another 1211 houses partially destroyed. Please note that these numbers exclude the demolished houses in Jenin Camp that hosted 13,000 people.

Needless to mention, of course, the "Israeli" use of internationally banned weapons against Palestinian civilians, and the devastating effects of this inhumane practice on the environment.

In dealing with the lands of the West Bank, "Israel" follows a policy of establishing permanent topographic separation between the Palestinian and Jewish population, huge safe passages are constructed in the Palestinian farming lands for the settlers to connect them directly to "Israel". Recent plans to establish a security zone that separates the West Bank from "Israel" threaten to create a 500m-wide permanent environmental block between the two sides of Historical Palestine.

Islamic *Waqf* Properties under Occupation

After the occupation of Palestine in 1948, Muslim and Christian holy places have no more been considered sacred as their occupants had already left. Many mosques were burned or destroyed, and some historical mosques were turned into restaurants and taverns (Al-Thahir Papers Mosque in Al-Majdal became a restaurant, Al-Suksuk Mosque in Yafa a club, Qisariyya Mosque a bar, The Small Mosque in Haifa a brothel, and The Mosque of Safad a Museum). Even the mosques that remained as places of worship are subjected to continuous violation and aggressive acts. Their instauration is not allowed, thus they are bound to even totally vanish. A total of 100 mosques face such kinds of violations throughout Palestine.

Endowment lands that were kept as *Waqf* properties (an Islamic Endowment system that keeps the property but spends its income for charity purposes) were confiscated allegedly because "their owners are absent". Even the deceased Arabs are not immune from these Zionist violations as many Muslim cemeteries were confiscated and used for different purposes. Ma'manullah cemetery in Al-Quds (Jerusalem) was converted to a public park in which the Plaza Hotel was built; Yazor cemetery in Yafa (Jaffa) became an industrial area and part of it was turned into a dumping ground; Al-Istiqlal cemetery in Haifa was partially removed, 3000 of its graves

were disinterred in order to lay the foundations of a new "Israeli" resort.

Before occupation, Islamic *Waqf* land area totaled 168,000 hectares, i.e. equal to 6.5% of the total area and 10% of the cultivable area of Palestine. 340 Palestinian villages were completely or partially allocated for *Waqf* such as Beit Foreek, Shatta, Sacsac and others. All these areas have been transferred to new owners, or to the state itself, to be utilized for different purposes, irrespective of their legal status before the establishment of "Israel".

Zionist Settlements

Background

After the 1967 war, which resulted in the "Israeli" control of the West Bank and Gaza Strip, the Golan Heights in Syria, and Sinai in Egypt, a dispute arose in the "Israeli" policy on how to deal with these newly-occupied areas. Apparently, "Israel" had occupied more lands than it could administer and much more than it expected. The occupied area, mainly the West Bank and Gaza Strip, were too populated to be annexed.

Except for Al-Quds (Jerusalem), the "Israeli" state had no specific plans towards the newly-occupied lands. One possibility was to annex both areas to "Israeli" territories, just like what happened in 1948, but this could not be implemented without large scale ethnic cleansing and a duplication of Jewish immigration to "Israel". Another possibility was to return most of these populated areas to their former administrator, Jordan, but to keep the following:

1. Al-Quds (Jerusalem),
2. Areas with water resources, mainly the Rift Valley (Al-Ghour), and
3. Security zones to enhance "Israeli" security especially near the borders.

In return, "Israel" expected permanent peace and normalization of relations with its Arab neighbors who should have realized, after their humiliating defeat of 1967, that it

would be fatal to face "Israel". This trend was clearly spelled in the Allon Plan for peace, suggested in July 1967 by the "Israeli" foreign minister Igal Allon. The third option was to keep these areas under "Israeli" military administration that should try to maximize advantage from them, and to use them to enhance "Israeli" security without any real "Israeli" demographic involvement except for the important areas outlined in the Allon Plan. "Israel" had, however, finally adopted the third possibility.

The West Bank contained many areas that the Jews considered holy, but the paradox was that it, as well as Gaza, were overwhelmingly Arab and may thus constitute a security risk in the long run, or limit "Israeli" accessibility to their lands and resources. Thus the above policy was changed later on, with the coming of the more fundamentalist "Israeli" political factions to power.

This introduction is important to show that the coined term "Israeli" Settlements (or Jewish or Zionist settlements, all refer to the same thing), refers to areas of "Israeli" demographic presence in the West Bank and Gaza strip, in other words the areas occupied in 1967 that became internationally known as Occupied Palestinian Territory (OPT), a definition that we also will adopt throughout this book.

In real terms, however, the areas occupied in 1948, internationally known as "Israel", are also occupied Palestinian territories that belong to the five million Palestinian refugees scattered in miserable camps throughout the neighboring countries and the rest of the world. Thus, in real terms this means that, with rare exceptions, every "Israeli" demographic presence of any form in historical

Palestine is a settlement and not an indigenous part of the land. (Indeed census proves that 74.03% of "Israeli" citizens living now in "Israel" are foreign immigrants born outside Palestine.)

Policies and Development of the Settlements

During the first decade of the occupation, 1967-77, the governing Labor party of "Israel" established settlements in accordance with the aforementioned Allon plan, i.e. they were concentrated in the areas of Al-Quds (Jerusalem) and its immediate suburbs: the Jordan or Rift Valley (Al-Ghour), the southeastern area of the West Bank, Southern Gaza Strip, and the Golan Heights.

When the Likud party assumed power for the first time in 1977, there were about 50,000 "Israeli" Jewish settlers in annexed Jerusalem and only 7,000 in 45 settlements scattered throughout the rest of the territory occupied in 1967. The extremist Likud headed towards colonizing the West Bank and Gaza Strip through establishing large-scale settlements. It adopted the so-called "Master Plan for the Development of Settlement in Judea and Samaria 1979-1983", which stressed the necessity of additional numerous settlement outposts and large urban concentrations in three principal areas: a north south border axis running from the Golan through the Jordan Valley and down the east cost of Sinai; a widened corridor around Jerusalem, and the populated western slopes of the "Samarian" heartland (southwestern part of the West Bank).

With this settlement plan, the Likud established an extensive pattern of settlements that disrupted the continuity of the Palestinian territory. During the 1980s, the settlement activities jumped to an average of 1,000 to 2,000 housing

units per year, in addition to government's investment in major infrastructure. The number of Jewish settlers increased dramatically during the 1980s and the early 1990s. In 1985 they counted in the West Bank, excluding East Al-Quds, 42,000, and by 1990 the figure reached 76,000 distributed across approximately 150 settlements. By 1995 the settled population increased to approximately 145,000, again excluding East Al-Quds.

The above numbers indicate that this massive settlement policy, adopted by the Likud in 1977, have become an established policy of "Israel", and subsequent Labor governments had, in fact, done nothing to change it. Indeed, the period after 1991, that witnessed some of the most intensive settlement programs, was dominated by Labor governments. The second trend to be noted here is that the "Israeli" drive for "creating facts on earth" had been imposed on others, especially during the peace negotiations.

While attending the Madrid Peace Conference in 1991 and conducting direct and secret negotiations with the Palestinian Liberation Organization (PLO) on the future of the West Bank and Gaza, "Israel" intensified the Jewish presence in these areas to make it virtually impossible to create a geographically and demographically united Palestinian State. "Israel" increased the number of settlers from 76,000 before the negotiations to 145,000 during the negotiations; i.e. within five years "Israel" doubled the number that took 23 years to accumulate.

Construction of Settlements during "Peace time"

During the period 1995-2000, the Peace Process was in motion and the Palestinian National Authority was established as a prelude to the formation of a Palestinian State

as indicated in the Oslo agreements. Nonetheless, "Israel" continued its drive to increase the number of settlers; in 2000 A.D. they amounted to: 176,000 in the West Bank, 6,900 in the Gaza Strip, and 173,000 in East Al-Quds (East Jerusalem), besides another 17,000 settlers living in the Jewish quarters and around the Old City. The total number is 372,900 settlers, i.e. the Jewish settlers form about 14.9% of the population of the West Bank that is supposedly the main territory of the planned Palestinian State. (Settlements formed a major source of dispute in the final status negotiations; please see more in the section on Peace Settlements). The main conclusion that we may arrive at is that "Israel" plans to maintain its presence in the West Bank and Gaza, even after the conclusion of a peace settlement with the Palestinians, in order to continue exploiting their water and land resources and to create Jewish demographic blocks that disconnect Palestinian cities and prevent any form of continuity between the Palestinian population. It, furthermore, aspires to create a complete demographic siege around Al-Quds, isolating the holy city and its Arab local population from the rest of Palestine. Look at the "Israeli" demographic siege created around Al-Quds. This demographic "Israeli" presence guarantees "Israel" a permanent military presence under the cover of protecting its citizens in the West Bank and Gaza, even if a final peace settlement of the dispute is signed with the Palestinians. "Israel" behaves and negotiates with the spirit of a colonizer who creates obstacles and blocks in order to press for more concessions under the cover that it is neither "fair" nor "practical" for the Palestinians to demand from "Israel" to throw out this huge number of people!

The Fourth Geneva Convention on the status of civilians during wartime says: "The Occupying Power shall not deport

or transfer parts of its own civilian population into the territory it occupies" article 49(6). Therefore, should we accept international law, and by whatever definition we may abide, the "Israeli" act of establishing Jewish settlements in the West Bank, including Al-Quds (Jerusalem), and in the Gaza strip? It is definitely illegal, no matter how many people live there, and should not therefore be accepted in any peaceful settlement of the dispute; i.e. their numbers do not justify their presence. In addition, many UN resolutions considered these settlements illegal and unacceptable, and demanded that they be dispersed immediately. Read for example Resolution 446 regarding "Israeli" Settlements.

During the process of establishing these settlements, "Israel" applied complex measures for illegal land expropriation. They ranged from the control of all state and communal lands, to the application of the emergency regulations of 1945 and the absentee property procedures, to the change of laws related to the expropriation of land, and through direct confiscation of privately owned land. This was coupled with massive exploitation of natural resources, especially water resources. Various significant financial incentives were also offered to encourage "Israelis" to move to the occupied territories, including rebates and low interest loans, free infrastructure services and the employment of a high percentage of settlers in the public sector.

Initially, the majority of settlers belonged to the left and center of the political spectrum, but eventually religious Jews from the mainstream became more prominent as settlers in a few specific urban settlements and settlements around East Al-Quds. The majority of settlers have always been armed and many have been the source of extreme harassment to the Palestinian people. (One of them, Barouche Goldstein, who

settled in Al-Khalil (Hebron), killed and wounded a large number of Palestinian civilians in Al-Khalil Mosque during a prayer on 25 February 1994). Generally, however, settlers remain within their defended settlements, maintaining links directly with "Israel" and with each other through huge bypass roads, but not with the Palestinian population around them. Gradually, and especially after the increase of bypass roads, the settlements have come to constitute a separate structure of life, differing greatly in lifestyle from that of the Palestinian people, particularly so as the "Israeli" army applies special rules and laws in these settlements.

Since the "Israeli" settlements are usually built overlooking Palestinian towns. The bypass roads constructed to connect them swallow large areas of Palestinian lands. Each of them is constructed higher than the landscape around it for "security reasons", and is thus surrounded with a 75 meter security zone from each side. Thus one can imagine how much of Palestinian land is needed for these roads, especially if we bear in mind that there are 200 miles of such roads in the Palestinian areas, whose cost, 3 billion U.S. dollars, was extended by the U.S. government.

This intensified process of settlement necessitated large-scale confiscation of Palestinian lands, increased uprooting of trees in the Palestinian farmlands and the demolition of many Palestinian houses. Since the signature of the Oslo Declaration of Principles in 1993, that initiated the Peace Process, and until August 2001, more than 70,000 acres of land were confiscated, over 674 homes demolished and 282,000 trees uprooted in the West Bank alone.

Selling "The Land"

As it was previously mentioned, the Jews managed, through illusive propaganda, to persuade the whole world that the Palestinians had sold Palestine and so they no longer have the right to ask for it.

Did the Palestinians really sell their land?

It is alleged by the Jews that the Palestinians left their homeland during the 1948 war willingly responding to an Arab broadcasted call. It is claimed that the Jews asked them to remain there. To refute such claims, some points have to be highlighted as follows:

Firstly, who denies civilians their right to naturally abandon their home in the case of war, especially on suffering from racial discrimination, in quest of safety waiting for the end of the war in order to return to their homelands?

Secondly, suppose the inhabitants of any country leave their homes in the case of war. Does that deny them the right to return to their home at the end of the war? Why then the Bosnians, Afghans, Chechnyans and others were permitted to return to their land while the Palestinians are prohibited to do the same. Why did the international community compel the governments in those countries to allow the refugees to return where as the Israel is not obligated to follow these steps?

Thirdly, if the Zionists really asked the Palestinians to remain in their homeland, why are they prevented from

returning to it especially when they could no longer endanger the Israelis? Why did they confiscate their lands and allocated them to Jewish settlers from 90 countries. Why did they not prove their good intentions?

Fourthly, the Jews claim that the Palestinians left their homes willingly. However, the Palestinians rejected to be nationalized in any other country except their land and now live in refugee camps. They spawned many revolutions and uprisings and procured tens of UN resolutions. Are all of that not enough to refute such a claim?

Fifthly, if the Jews alleged that they have the right to return to Palestine after leaving it for 2000 years, why then do they deny the Palestinians their right to return to their homeland after leaving it for only a few years. If the return of the refugees to their home is a right that becomes invalid by prescription, thus the right of the Jews to return to Palestine prescribed since a very long time.

The reality is that historical evidences and the confessions of the Jews themselves refute their claims. In 1961 the Irish journalist Erskine Childers spent several months in quest of the real reason of immigration of the Palestinians. He asked the Zionist leaders to show him single evidence proving their claims but they failed. He concluded that the Arabic broadcasts encouraged the Palestinians to remain in Palestine, whereas the Israeli broadcasts prompted them to leave.

However, Zionists, from the very beginning, indisputably planned to make Palestine a Jewish state. They dreamt of a free-of-Arabs Palestine. They themselves confessed afterwards that they applied an expanded plan called "the plan of Dalet" in order to force the Palestinians to emigrate. Ultimately, the emigration of the Palestinians was a well-

planned matter and it was commonly-agreed upon and supervised by the chief Zionist leaders.

Yet, did the Palestinians really sell their land to the Jews? Indeed to answer this question, some historical facts have to be illustrated:

Firstly, the Jews build their claims on the illusion that "Palestine is a land without a nation for a nation without land". Reasonably, the Jews, as a landless nation, have the complete right to possess this land. However, Palestine at that time was a populous long-standing nation.

Secondly, although Sultan `Abd al-Hamid issued a decree to resist the Jewish immigration and settlement, the corrupted Ottoman administration prevented such a decree to be passed. Additionally, the Committee of Union and Progress, that was nearly predominated by the Jews, had the upper hand within the Ottoman Empire and so they facilitated the immigration of the Jews to Palestine and helped them possess lands there.

Thirdly, those who had sold the land to the Jews were of four categories: first was the non-Palestinians feudatories who owned large lands there but they were prevented by the British authorities to go into Palestine to invest their own lands under the pretext of being foreigners after applying the Sykes Picot Agreement. This resulted in bestowing upon the Jews nearly 50% of the land they managed to purchase. Second was the land sold, by an auction, by the Ottoman Empire, due to its financial crisis, directly to the Jews themselves or to the non-Palestinian families that sold them, in turn, to the Jews for the above-mentioned reasons. Third was the extremely limited number of unscrupulous Palestinians who could not resist the allurements offered by the Jews and the British authorities. Fourth was the assistance

of the British mandatory power that used to dispossess the Palestinians of their lands and grant them to the Jews free or at least for a meager sum. Thus, all that the Jews could possess of the land of Palestine did not exceed 1% of Palestine between 1917-1948. The matter that indicates how far the Jews exerted great efforts to possess this land and how far the Palestinians resisted all these great efforts defending their own land.

However, the real reason for the loss of Palestine was not the selling of it by the Palestinians; rather it was the defeat of the Arab armies in the 1948 war that led to establishing the Israeli entity on 77% of the Palestinian land. Then, the Jews drove the Palestinians out, made them homeless and confiscated their lands. Then, they occupied the rest of Palestine after defeating the Arab armies in the 1967-war and also confiscated large lands under different pretexts.

Islamic Stand

Since the early days of the struggle, Muslim scholars took a firm stand against selling land to Zionist individuals and for Zionist projects. Helping the Zionist to achieve their goals by any means was forbidden and considered a form of high treason. All lands under the Islamic rule are considered the property of all Muslims, "*Waqf*", and nobody has the right to give it up on their behalf. Palestine, being the holy land mentioned in the Qur'an, is of high regard and affection in the hearts of Muslims, and nobody is thus eligible to give a single meter of its land to foreign rule.

With this understanding, the Islamic Supreme Council, presided by the Palestinian scholar Haj Amin Al-Husaini, fought the Zionist project in every possible way. On the 25th

of January 1935 they issued a Fatwa (an Islamic ruling) by consensus that condemned the selling of land to the Zionists a major sin that is equal to apostasy. Anybody who sells any piece of land to the Zionists, no matter how small it is, or facilitates by any means their acquisition of the land, is considered an apostate, who should not be buried in Muslim cemeteries and had to be boycotted in all fields of life. His actions should be made known to all, and the society should condemn him as an outcast. Following this Fatwa, scholars around the Muslim world issued similar *Fatwas* supporting the above position, which thus became compulsory to all Muslims.

The Palestinian criminal law practiced by the Palestinian National Authority (PNA), followed this ruling, and imposed capital punishment on all those who sell or facilitate selling of lands to the Zionists.

Peace with "Israel" is considered on the same level. Admitting "Israel's" right to exist means legitimizing its rule over 77% of the Muslim Palestinian land, which is not acceptable at all. When the peace process started in Madrid 1991, Muslim scholars assembled at a conference in Al-Aqsa mosque on 1 November 1991 and issued a Fatwa that condemned participation in the Madrid peace conference, or any other peace talks with "Israel"; such acts are as illegal (*Haram*) for 10 reasons. Amongst them is that this will lead to admitting the right of "Israel" to exist as a state; it is a form of accepting injustice and of submission to enemies who fought and killed Muslims and continue to do so, it is a termination of Jihad (struggle in the way of God at all levels), a permanent obligatory duty on all Muslims until Doomsday, through which Muslims would be able to recover their lost

lands. Many Fatwas rulings were also issued supporting this position.

During the intifada of Al-Aqsa 2000, many Muslim scholars, including the famous Dr. Yusuf Al-Qardawi, reaffirmed the Islamic stand regarding dealings with the Zionists. Transactions with the Zionists, and those who support them, are forbidden as a form of deviance; and boycotting them shall remain an obligation until the restoration of all Muslim rights in Palestine.

Al-Quds,
An Overview

There is hardly any media coverage of the situation in Palestine (or the Middle East as it is usually referred to) that does not mention Al-Quds (Jerusalem), or display its golden holy shrine in the background. Being one of the oldest cities on Earth, a holy city for the three Abrahamic religions, Islam, Christianity and Judaism, and the assumed capital by both disputing parties, its issue is at the heart of this conflict.

Indeed, the current intifada of Al-Aqsa, which witnessed some of the worst incidents of bloodshed in the history of this generations-old dispute, started after the current "Israeli" Prime Minister, then the leader of the opposition, entered Al-Aqsa Mosque on 28 September 2000 protected by 2000 "Israeli" soldiers, in flagrant defiance of the local Muslim population and Muslims around the world.

Control over the occupied city, had been a thorny issue in the last and longest ever peace talks held at Camp David between the late Palestinian Leader, Yasser Arafat, the "Israeli" Labor Prime Minister, Ehud Barak, which was facilitated by the American President Bill Clinton. The result of the two weeks long talks was a historic failure over the issue of Jerusalem, thus ending the peace process, at least for the time being. (Please see more on the section on peace settlements and on Palestinian resistance).

The City: Al-Quds is its Arabic name that is derived from a root that means holiness. It is a marvelous city located 55km^2 from the Mediterranean Sea and 22km^2 from the Dead Sea at an altitude of 720-800m above sea level; it is one of the few cities that enjoy mountainous temperate climate with the odor of the sea surrounding it. The stones of its ancient buildings narrate the stories of 5000 years of human civilization that involved millions of lives, and of struggles, love, hate and faith. It houses some of the major shrines of Islam, Christianity and Judaism. In short, it is a concentration of the holiness of Palestine in the world.

Places and Sites: Jerusalem is composed of two main parts, Eastern Jerusalem that encompasses most of the religious historical sites and is composed of the Old City and its surroundings. The Old City is totally surrounded by walls that were built for protection. It has eight gates: Bab Al-Khalil (Jaffa Gate), Bab Al-Jadid, Bab Al-Amoud (Damascus Gate), Bab Al-Zaherah (Al-Samereh), Bab Al-Asbat, Bab Al-Magharbeh, Bab Al-Rahmeh and Bab Al-Nabi Dawud. Western Jerusalem, which was annexed by "Israel" after its occupation in 1948, is built in the style of modern cities. Eastern Jerusalem is surrounded by mountainous forests on which "Israel" has built various settlements. The main quarters of Al-Quds, besides the old city, are: Shu`fat, Sheikh Jarrah, Wadi El Joaz, El Tor, Selwan,, Sur Baher and Al-Qastal. More quarters and districts have been recently built on the neighboring mountains of Al-Masharefi, Al-Qatamoun and Al-Mukabber.

History of the City

Establishment and the Coming of the Jews

The city was first built by the Jebusites, a branch of the Semitic Canaanites around 3000 B.C.; it was first called Jebus, then Hierosolyma that is believed to mean the City of Peace. However, another version maintains that it was named after one of the Canaanite gods, Salem, the name then underwent changes by the Hebrews, the Ancient Egyptians, the Greeks and the Franks to become Jerusalem. It remained under the Canaanites until the Jewish conquest in 997 B.C. by Prophet Dawud (David), who made it his capital after Hebron. The city remained under his reign and his son, Sulayman(Solomon) until their kingdom was divided into two: Israel with Shechem, and subsequently Samaria, as its capital, and Judah with Jerusalem as its capital; the city remained under the kingdom of Judah until 586 B.C. when Nebuchadnezzar conquered it enslaving 50,000 Jews. Subsequently, Jerusalem was annexed to the Persian Empire (539-332 B.C.), which allowed the Jews to establish a form of autonomy.

After falling to Alexander the Great, the city remained under Hellenistic rule that allowed the Jews an independent rule over Jerusalem following their revolt against the Greek rulers. The Maccabeans established themselves as the rulers of Jerusalem (141-37 B.C.); and committed horrifying massacres to force the people to convert to Judaism. The

Roman ruler Herod (37-4 B.C.), who converted to Judaism, rebuilt the temple of Solomon to gain popularity among the Jews. Herod also executed Prophet Yahya (John the Baptist) and his father Zakaria (Zacharias). The Jews revolted several times against Roman rule, in 66 C.E. their revolution was crushed brutally by Titus who destroyed the Temple. In 135 A.D. the Jews revolted for the last time, Emperor Hadrian devastated the city completely, built a new city over its ruins, called Aelia Capitolina, and placed the statue of Jupiter over the ruins of the Temple of Herod. Since then, the Jews never established any form of rule in Jerusalem.

Christian and Muslim Eras

The Roman Emperor, Constantine, accepted Christianity and visited Palestine. His mother, Helena, built the Church of *Qiyamah* (Church of the Holy Sepulcher [Resurrection] and the Church of *Mahd* (or Nativity). The city then passed to the Byzantine rule; most of its local people embraced Christianity until the Muslims opened it. The city was then peacefully handed by its Patriarch, Sophronius, to the Muslim Caliph Umar ibn al-Khattab; marking the only peaceful transfer of power that the city witnessed in its long history. The Caliph and the Patriarch signed an agreement that came to be known as *Al-`Uhda Al-`Umariyyah* (The Covenant of Umar), in which the Christian population of the city was given the right of residence and freedom of worship, and were allowed to keep their holy places intact and to freely perform all their religious rituals, Byzantine residents of the city were given the choice either to go back safely, or to stay unarmed in Jerusalem and lead an ordinary life there.

Under the Muslims, the city flourished and became a center of civilization; some of the world's finest pieces of

architecture were built there, including the famous golden Dome of the Rock, built by the Umayyad Caliph Abdul Malek ibn Marwan in 68-72 H (688-691 A.D.). Muslims gave the city its new name, Al-Quds or Bait Al-Maqdis.

The Crusades and the Return to Muslim Rule

The situation continued as such until the beginning of the Crusades (1099 A.D./ 493 H). The Crusaders entered Al-Quds with a deluge of human blood, killing 70,000 of the residents of the city alone, needless to mention the rest of Palestine. During this period, The Dome of the Rock became a church, and parts of Al-Aqsa mosque were used as stable for the crusaders' horses; traces of this kind of abuse are carved in the stones of the mosque until today. No kind of freedom was given to the Muslims of the city. However, the resistance of the neighboring weak Muslim kingdoms never stopped; the Crusaders faced a people of a superior civilization and culture, although militarily weak. Muslims at that time still had the moral strength and vitality to fight back.

Saladin, a man who symbolized a whole generation, continued a liberation war that had been started by his predecessors Imad ad-Din Zangi and Nur ad-Din Zangi. The battle of Hittin (1187 A.D.) was a turning point in the history of the Crusades, leading to the liberation of Al-Quds over which the Muslims got the upper hand. The last trace of the Crusaders was cleared by the destruction of Acre Kingdome in 1291.

The Mongols and the Tartars constituted the next threat to the city, and they managed to control northern Palestine in the spring of 1260 A.D. Soon, however, they were defeated in the battle of `Ain Jaloot in northern Palestine in September 1260.

Since then, Palestine remained under Muslim rule, first under the Mamlukes (1260-1516), and then the Ottomans (1516-1917). The city was then subjected to British colonization.

In 1948 the western part of the city was among the Palestinian lands occupied by "Israel"; the Zionist gangs destroyed 37 of the 41 Palestinian villages around Al-Quds, driving out 80,000 local Arabs. The remaining part of the city, the eastern part, was placed, like the rest of the West Bank, under Jordanian administration. In 1967 the rest of the city fell in the hands of Zionists. "Israel" annexed the city in 1980 and declared unified Jerusalem as its "only and eternal capital".

Holy Sites in Al-Quds

As previously mentioned, Al-Quds contains holy places for more than half of the world's population; it is a concentration of holiness on Earth. In this section we will give a general survey of the city's holy sites for Muslims, Christians and Jews, while the next section will be fully devoted to Al-Aqsa Mosque.

For Muslims: Al-Aqsa Mosque is the most important Muslim site in Palestine, and the third Holy Mosque of Islam. Not far from it stands the historical Mosque of Umar (*Al-Masjid Al-Umari*) established on the site where Caliph Umar prayed on his arrival to take the keys of Al-Quds from its Patriarch. Al-Quds houses historical cemeteries of the early Muslims who came to this land, amongst whom are some of the companions of Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him). Besides, the belief in the holiness of this land encouraged many local landowners to designate large areas of land as Islamic endowments (*Waqf*). According to Islamic law, these endowments are the property of all Muslims throughout the generations for as long as they exist. Endowment land included the annihilated Al-Magharbeh Quarter that Salahuddin (Saladin) designated for the Moroccan volunteers who fought with him, converted now into a yard for Jewish worshippers near the "Wailing Wall"; and Abu Ghunaim Mountain on which the "Israeli" colony of Har Homa has been established. Besides these mosques, cemeteries and *Waqf* lands, many schools and Sufi corners spread all over the

city. As a Muslim city since 636 A.D., it is natural to find in it Muslim religious and historical sites. In fact, being a holy Muslim city, Al-Quds embraces Muslim sites almost in every corner and on every stone.

For Christians: Al-Quds was among the places in which Jesus of Nazareth (Isa) preached during his journey of faith around Palestine. It was the last destination in this journey, and the place were he was captured. Christians believe that he was executed there by the Roman ruler on the request of the Jewish leaders who plotted against him. For Christians, this city witnessed his Resurrection and his last meeting with his disciples. After this incident, the Christians named one of their holiest churches, the Church of the Holy Sepulcher, that was built by Helena, the mother of the first Christian Roman Emperor, Constantine. Almost all Christian Churches and denominations around the world have their representatives in Al-Quds, contributing to the city's unique social texture.

For the Jews: As we have seen in the sections "Whose Land is it?" and "History of the City", Palestine was the place to which Prophet Ibrahim (Abraham) migrated, and from which the sons of Israel originated, it is the land to which they escaped, with Prophet Musa (Moses), from the tyranny of the Pharaoh; it is the land in which they established their historical kingdoms, and where the same kingdoms were devastated for good. As for Al-Quds, the Jews believe that the Temple of Solomon (Sulayman) was built on its soil, and exactly under the main building of Al-Aqsa Mosque. They believe that the Western Wall of the mosque is a remaining part of the Temple, in which they practiced their worship activity since the late eighteenth century the wall is also known as "The Wailing Wall". Some cemeteries near Al-

Aqsa Mosque were "re-established", based on the belief that some of the Ancient Jews were buried at the same site. Excavations are going on under Al-Aqsa Mosque to find traces of the Temple or of any Jewish monument in the area, but, for the past 34 years, no trace of this presumed temple was found under the mosque.

Foreign visitors to Jerusalem may conclude, based on the Hebrew names of the places that they visit, that the city is exclusively composed of Jewish sites and quarters. But these names had never existed before 1948, or used by the local Arab and Muslim people who have been there for the last 1400 years. For example, let us look at the names of the gates of the Old City in Al-Quds:

Table Comparing Arabic Names of the gates of the Old City with their New Hebrew Counterparts:

	Arabic name	**Judaized name**
1.	**Bab Al-Khalil**	**Shaghar Yafo (Jaffa)**
2.	**Bab Al-Jadid**	**Shaghar Hadash**
3.	**Bab Al-Amoud,**	**Damascus Shaghar Shkeim**
4.	**Bab Al-Zaherah (Al Samerah)**	**Shaghar Herodons**
5.	**Bab Setna Mariam**	**Shaghar Ha'ariout (Al Aswad)**
6.	**Bab Al-Magharbeh**	**Shaghar Ha'ashfa (Wastes)**
7.	**Bab Al-Rahmah**	**Shaghar Harhameem**
8.	**Bab Al-Nabi Da'oud**	**Shaghar Tensyoon "Zion"**

Likewise, although no traces of the Temple were found after 34 years of excavations, the "Israelis" insist to call the mount on which they assume it to be the "Temple Mount", notwithstanding the existence of the very well-known Al-Aqsa Mosque there.

Al-Aqsa Mosque

The first *Qibla* of the Muslims (the direction to which Muslims pray) and the third holiest shrine of Islam; it comes after *Al-Haram* in Mecca and the Prophet's Mosque in Medina. A Prayer in Al-Aqsa Mosque is equal to 500 prayers as the Prophet said. It is the second mosque built on earth after Al-Ka`ba in Mecca.

It is from this mosque that Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) was escalated to heaven "*Mi`raj*", after he reached there from Mecca in his night journey "*Isra'*"; since then Muslims called the city "the gate to the heavens". In this journey, Prophet Muhammad (peace n him) led the prophets in a nightly congregational prayer in Al-Aqsa Mosque. It is one of three mosques to which Muslims should make the effort of travel.

As its Arabic name indicates, it is the "far mosque" because it is located far away from the place where the call of Islam started. It was considered a mosque since the early beginning of Islam, almost 17 years before Islam reached its vicinity. Due to this uniqueness, the Qur'an gave it the name, Al-Aqsa. To encourage Muslims to visit, take care and honor this mosque, Prophet Muhammad, who died before Muslims control it, instructed the Muslims: *"You should take the burden of travel to pray in Al-Aqsa Mosque, and those of you who cannot go, let them send oil to lighten it".*

***Al-Haram*:** It is an Arabic word that means the holy place, and is usually used by Muslims to refer to the holy area of the Three Holy Mosques: *Al-Haram* of Mecca, the Mosque of the Prophet in Medina and Al-Aqsa Mosque in Al-Quds. As for Al-Aqsa Mosque, *Al-Haram* refers to the whole area inside the walls, including the main building of the Mosque, *The Marwani Musalla* (*Musalla* is a small prayer place, smaller than, or a part of, a mosque), the Dome of the Rock and the grounds that connects all of them inside the walls. The whole area of the Mosque is 14 hectares, about 15% of the area of the Old City (The Old City's area is 1 km^2). *Al-Haram Al-Sharif* itself has 14 doors, of which 10 are in use today. There are 25 drinking water wells in *Al-Haram*, 8 of them are around the Dome of the Rock.

The Mosque Building: It is located at the southern side of *Al-Haram* towards the direction of the *Qibla*. This building is located 150 meters away from the Dome of the Rock and its interior is 80 meters long and 55 meters wide, with a dome in the center of the ceiling. It has 11 doors: 7 on the northern side, 1 on the eastern side, 2 on the western side, and 1 on the southern side. The exact date of the construction of the Mosque is not known, although most modern historians agree that it was completed in the time of the Umayyad Caliph Al-Waleed ibn `Abdel Malek during the period 86-96 A.H (705-714 A.C.), replacing the first Mosque that was built by the rightly-guided Caliph Umar. Al-Aqsa has 53 marble columns and 49 stone pillars. Stone pillars are huge square supports, while the columns are smaller and cut from marble. The dome is in the middle at a height of 17 meters, covered with mosaics that made it more splendid and charming.

The *Qiblah* is under the dome in the southern end. It used to be called the *Mihrab* of Dawud, but was later changed to the *Mihrab* of Umar. Al-Aqsa contains a women's section consisting of 10 bridges built upon 9 well-built pillars.

Dome of the Rock: Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) made his night journey "*Isra'*" and subsequently escalated to heaven "*Mi'raj*", on a heavenly creature, called *Al-Buraq* who could travel at an unimaginable speed. At the beginning of the journey to heaven, *Al-Buraq* was stationed over a rock near to the mosque from which it departed with its only passenger, Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him). When Muslims opened the city, they managed to recognize the rock from the description given to it by the Prophet, and built a huge memorial building that they named after it, i.e. the Dome of the Rock. The rock is a huge irregular block that conceals a cave beneath, now used as a prayer room.

The dome is a marvelous building located in the middle of *Al-Haram*, that was built by the Umayyad Caliph Abdel Malek ibn Marwan in 65-86 A.H. (685-705 A.C.). A simulation of the dome was first built, that is the dome of Al-Selselah, and when the design was approved by the Caliph, the construction started. The Dome of the Rock was creatively constructed on a hilly area, that was naturally higher than the rest of *Al-Haram*. The hill around the Dome, known as the yard or the dish of the Rock, is covered with white marble, and the hilly area around it is accessible by 9 stone stairs, leading up to the Dome known as Al-Maraqi.

The Dome of the Rock is composed of an octagon, upon which stands a wooden neck and then comes the golden dome. The octagon has four of its sides facing the four directions, and the Rock is in its center. It is about 1.5 meters

high, 18 meters long and 13 meters wide. The neck has some shells with 16 windows, made internally of glaze and externally of china blocks or "*Qashany*" decorated with circular vents. The dome is made of wood and lead, it used to be covered with copper which is replaced now by gilded aluminum. The span between its two layers is 1 meter, the diameter of the dome is 20 meters, and its height is 35 meters, towered by a 4.5-meter crescent.

In sum, the mosaic covers about 1.200 meters of the interior that is lightened by 56 windows, of which 40 are transparent and 16 are opaque, each of which is towered by a holy Qur'anic verse.

Al-Aqsa Mosque Under Occupation

Al-Aqsa Mosque fell under occupation, together with the Eastern part of Al-Quds, after the 1967 war. Since that time it has been subjected to continuous violations that threatened its existence, and caused political tension around the Muslim World. Although the "Israeli" military administration allowed it to be under nominal Jordanian administration, the Mosque's sacredness was intentionally and repeatedly violated, and Muslims were banned from doing any works of renovation to its building, though this was allowed for the Dome of the Rock. The main recorded violations were:

1. **Ban of Muslim Visitors to the Mosque:** Throughout Islamic history, Al-Aqsa mosque had been the second destination, after Mecca, for Muslim pilgrims. After finishing their pilgrimage to Mecca, Muslims used to continue this journey of life to Al-Aqsa mosque, and some of them were so attracted by the life and beauty of the city that they settled in Al-Quds. Today, millions of Muslims are annually deprived

from visiting the occupied city and its mosque that they anxiously want to see.

2. **Claims over the Wailing Wall:** Jews claim that the Western Wall of the Mosque is the remaining wall of the Temple of Solomon that used to exist exactly under the current Mosque's building. Consequently they conducted, since the sixteenth century, rituals of worship there. On 23 September 1928 Jewish worshippers provoked Muslims by holding a prayer service during which they used the Horn and hanged a curtain with Hebrew slogans on the wall of the Mosque. These acts disturbed Muslim worshipers inside the Mosque, especially as the Jews did not, in the past, hold prayer services in the area on a regular basis. This act was thus condemned as an unprecedented Jewish attempt to infringe Muslim rights. In August 1929, the Jews tried to hold, by force, prayer services in the same place, a development that led to the revolt of 1929, known as *Al-Buraq* Revolt. (The wall is known by Muslims as *Al-Buraq* Wall as Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) is believed to have left *Al-Buraq*, his heavenly carrier, during the Journey of *Al-Isra'* near this wall to lead the Prophets in prayer.)

The Jewish claims over the Mosque do not, however, end here. The ultimate aim of many Jewish Zionists including seculars like Ben Gurion is to demolish Al-Aqsa Mosque and build the Third Temple exactly in its place. Indeed, a simulation of the Temple with an area of $400m^2$ exists on one of the mountains of Al-Quds. A Jewish group that calls itself "The Guards of the Temple", together with the "Faithful of the Temple Mount" and some Christian fundamentalist groups, who fund all these activities, attempt every 3-4 years to place the foundation stone for the Temple inside *Al-Haram*

area. Such attempts are usually accompanied with bloodshed and killing of Muslim worshippers (like that of 8 October 1990), the last was in July 2001.

3. **Burning the Mosque:** On 21 August 1969 Michael Rohan, an Australian Christian fundamentalist, set fire to the Mosque, burning Saladin's pulpit and 1,500 cubic meters of the southeastern part of the Mosque. This crime damaged about one third of the mosque's interior, about 4,400 cubic meters. "Israeli" forces cut off the water supply and obstructed the arrival of the fire engines on time to extinguish the fire, aiming at maximizing the damage. Following this alarming incident, leaders of Muslim countries assembled and formed the Organization of Islamic Conference (OIC).

4. **Repeated attempts by Jews to pray in the Mosque:** The first attempt was on 18 August 1969 when a group of 25 Jews forced their way into the Mosque, using horns and reciting hymns, carols and some verses from the Torah. The second attempt was on 28 December 1976 when an "Israeli" judge allowed some Jews, accompanied by a group of "Israeli" Members of Parliament, to pray in the Mosque. The latest attempt was masterminded by Ariel Sharon, then leader of the "Israeli" opposition, who tried under the protection of 2000 soldiers, to visit Al-Aqsa, arguing that this was "an attempt of an "Israeli" citizen to visit part of his land". The intifada of Al-Aqsa erupted immediately after this provocative visit.

5. **Repeated attempts to bomb Al-Aqsa:** Some of these attempts were:

> **a.** The "Israeli" forces found a store of explosives near Al-Aqsa, planted by Me'air Kahana and his gangsters in May1980.

b. The Arab guards caught 49 Jews carrying explosives and arrested them, but they were released the following day on 11 March 1983.

c. Three bombs, of the type used by the "Israeli" army, were found inside a big pumpkin on 30 January 1984.

d. The Arab guards discovered a large amount of explosives hidden under the branches of a tree, that were timed to explode on the arrival of Mr. Helmet Kohl, the German Chancellor, on a visit to *Al-Haram* in 1985.

6. **The armed break-in and shooting down of the worshippers: The most important of these incidents were:**

a. A group of armed fanatic "Israeli" settlers, from Keryat Arbac settlement in Al-Khalil (Hebron), broke into Al-Aqsa and skirmished with the guards.

b. An "Israeli" soldier, Eli Jethman, broke into the Dome of the Rock and shot down 2 guards, Muslims responded, and the incident led to the killing of 9 worshippers and the injury of 136.

c. The worst massacre was on 8 October 1990 when "Israeli" soldiers killed 20 and injured 115 worshippers under the guise of protecting a Jewish group, called "Trustees of The Temple", that tried to lay down the foundation stone for the Third Temple.

7. **Excavations under *Al-Haram Al-Sharif*:** The Jewish community in "Israel" has been striving to sustain its historical and religious claims in Palestine, especially Al-Quds and the Temple with material archeological evidence.

Jewish excavations started under the Mosque on 11 June 1967, only five days after the occupation of the city, but, to their disappointment, they discovered many Muslim traces there. Many existing Muslim monuments were destroyed by the Jews, in the course of these excavations, and Al-Aqsa itself is now threatened, observers expect that the Mosque may collapse at any moment. These "Israeli" excavations passed through nine stages:

a. **The First Stage:** 1967-1968 that was financed by the Hebrew University and carried out by a team led by Professor Benjamin Meizar. However, they only found Umayyad, Roman and Byzantine monuments.

b. **The Second Stage:** It began where the first stage left off and extended north until Bab Al-Magharbeh. It ran under a lot of Islamic buildings such as the "Honorable Corner" and the Imam Al-Shafi`i Center. These buildings sustained cracks in the process and were removed on 14 June 1969. They found three Umayyad palaces.

c. **The Third Stage:** The excavations were conducted during the period 1970 - 1974, Then resumed in 1975 and lasted until 1988. They were in the area under the Legal Court, the oldest Islamic building in Al-Quds, passing through the area under 5 doors of *Al-Haram*, at length of 180 meters. It ran under a lot of houses, facilities, mosques and schools at a depth of 10-14 meters and a length of 400 meters. This resulted in the cracking of several buildings such as the Ottoman mosque. Al-Jawharia School, the lower part of the Islamic court, was changed to a synagogue. In March 1987, the "Israelis" declared that

they had located the path, measuring 500 meters, that was originally discovered by the German General Conrad Chek in the nineteenth century. The attempt to operate this tunnel was forcibly stopped by Muslims and the tunnel was thereafter closed.

d. The Fourth and Fifth Stages: Excavations took place during 1973 and 1974. They included the area under the southeastern part of Al-Aqsa penetrating to the southern wall of *Al-Haram*, which leads to the Mosque itself, at a depth of 20 meters. It ran under Umar's Mosque and the southeastern corridors, creating a very dangerous situation.

e. The Sixth Stage: Excavations were conducted in 1977 in the middle of the eastern wall, between the Gate of *Setena Mariam* and the northeastern corner, endangering the Islamic cemetery there.

f. The Seventh Stage: These excavations aimed at deepening the area of *Al-Buraq* wall, adjacent to the western wall, and included several neighboring buildings such as the old Islamic court, Al-Tankizia School, the library of Al-Khaledia and more than 35 houses inhabited by 250 Palestinians.

g. The Eighth Stage: Excavations began in 1976 as a continuation of the fourth and fifth stages. They included the area behind the walls and the southern area. Their purpose was to explore the burials of the kings of Israel in David's city. The process caused a lot of cracks in the southern walls of Al-Aqsa.

h. The Ninth Stage: Excavations began on 21 August 1981, the 13th anniversary of the ominous

arson mentioned above. "Israeli" forces began a new stage of excavations to re-open a tunnel that was 25 meters long and 6 meters wide, discovered by the English Colonel Warren in 1876. These excavations caused a lot of cracks, which compelled the Islamic Department "*Awqaf*" to interfere on 29 August 1981 and stop them by blocking the entrance with concrete. However, it was re-opened on 24 September 1996 on the eve of a Hebrew holiday, a development that triggered a strong Palestinian reaction which was cruelly suppressed by the "Israelis". 62 Palestinians were killed and 1600 were injured across Palestine. In the same incident 14 "Israeli" soldiers were killed and 50 were injured.

Al-Quds under Occupation

Al-Quds (Jerusalem) was occupied in two stages: the first was in 1948 when the western part of the city, that constituted 84.1% of its total area, was annexed. In addition, out of the 40 villages surrounding West Al-Quds, 37 were destroyed by the Zionist gangs who committed the worst form of ethnic cleansing. Many of these villages witnessed horrible massacres, of which the most well-known was the that of Deir Yassin on 9-10 April 1948, in which all its inhabitants, except few unnoticed survivors, were killed in cold blood. The death toll of Deir Yassin was between 116 according to the estimations of the leaders of the Irgun Zionist gang who committed these atrocities, but eyewitnesses from the Red Cross and the survivor inhabitants of the village estimated it well above this figure, at 254. This and other Zionist terrorist activities forced 80,000 local Arabs to leave the densely populated western part of Al-Quds.

The lands of Western Al-Quds, of which 85% were owned by local Arabs, were subjected according to the "Israeli" laws, mainly the Absentees' Property Law that facilitated transforming their ownership to Jewish immigrants.

The Eastern part of the city, which includes the Old City and all the religious sites, became a part of the West Bank by the *de facto* borders of 1948. The whole West Bank, together with East Al-Quds, fell to "Israeli" occupation in the 1967 war. Since the Zionists considered Jerusalem a part

component of "their" Jewish homeland, immediate actions were taken to change the identity of East Al-Quds, and to expropriate as much as possible of its land.

On the sixth day of its occupation, 11 June 1967, excavations under Al-Aqsa Mosque started, and new Jewish quarters were immediately established in an attempt to make both the eastern and western parts of Jerusalem the "unified capital of "Israel". "Israel" unified both parts of the city under its authority on 27 June 1967, and declared unified Jerusalem as its eternal capital on 30 July 1980.

By then, Al-Quds was declared an integral part of "Israeli" territory, and not an occupied land, and any further lands that may in future be declared a part of it would automatically become an "Israeli" land forever. Hence, it is in favor of "Israel" to expand the borders of the city so that more Palestinian lands from the West Bank will be acquired. After its occupation in 1967, the municipal area of East Al-Quds was 6.5 km^2, but by 1990 it increased to 123 km^2, about 2.2% of the area of the West Bank. Furthermore, the "Israeli" authorities started the project of "Greater Jerusalem" that plans to expand the municipal borders of the city to 840 km^2 that would take up 14.9% of the area of the West Bank. Of the total area of Al-Quds today, 86% is owned by "Israelis", only 4% remained under Arab ownership and the remaining 10% is subject to the "Israeli" Public Interest Law that allocate it for future civil public facilities. (noting that in 1917 Palestinians owned 90% of the city).

These lands were mainly expropriated through "Israeli" laws that banned property transfer between Arabs, and prohibited inheritance unless the heirs live or work on the property. Coupled with this ban was the enactment of

educational and economic constraints to force Arab citizens to migrate, and, therefore, become ineligible for inheritance of property in Al-Quds. In such cases, the property goes to the Guard of Absentees' property who in turn reallocates it to Jewish owners. Officials in the "Israeli" property bureaus and in courts had also collaborated with Jewish settlers to issue false ownership certificates that drove the original Arab owners out of their lands. Furthermore, *Waqf* (Muslim Endowment) properties were considered Absentees' Properties in order to reallocate them to Jewish settlers, and lengthy legal procedures and acts were enacted by the "law abiding" state of "Israel" to guarantee the "legal" transfer of land to Jewish owners!

In 1917, while the Zionist project was in its infancy, over 75% of the population of Al-Quds were local Arabs and less than 25% Jews. But by 2000 A.D., out of the total population of both western and eastern parts of the city (about 650,000) about 450,000 (69.2%) were Jews and only 200,000 (30.8%) were Arabs living mostly in East Al-Quds. Among the 450,000 Jews 190,000 live in East Al-Quds, scattered in 11 quarters and 25 settlements. Arab citizens of Al-Quds live in miserable conditions, paying a heavy tax that reaches 67-85%, in addition to a special property and real estate tax, called "Arnona", imposed on the inhabitants of Al-Quds only. For an average shop in the Old City, Arnona tax reaches as much as 18,000-25,000 "Israeli" Shekels (4390-6097 U.S.$ at exch. Rate 4.1, 2001), which forced many Palestinian merchants to close their businesses or migrate to other areas in Palestine.

Besides, the inhabitants of the Old City and the central areas are not allowed to renovate their properties under any

pretext, for instance being so old that renovation may destroy its cultural value, or under the cover of absence of a proper license for renovation that is never granted! On the other hand, they get big offers to sell their properties to Jewish schools, institutions or individuals. All this effort is undertaken to exert psychological and financial pressure on the Arab citizens to compel them to leave their land.

Unlike in the central areas of the city, the demolition of houses and other buildings on the peripheries was validated by different means. Every house is required to have a building license that required at least 10 years to be issued, if ever. Thus Arab citizens are usually compelled to build their houses without waiting for this agony. But “Israeli” authorities use this as a cover to demolish these houses and confiscate their lands under the guise they are “illegal”. Since 2001, there are more than 300 such houses in the Arab quarters of Al-Quds that are facing the threat of demolition.

Chapter Two

People in Palestine

Historical Composition of the People of Palestine

The first trace of life in Palestine dates back to 500,000 years ago, during the Lower Paleolithic era, and since then, life has continued in this land consistently for most of the time. Successive migrations brought different peoples to this land: Semitic migrations from the Arabian Peninsula in 3000-2500 B.C. brought the Jebusites, Amorites, Phoenicians and the Canaanites, who formed most of the population of Palestine, and gave the land their name. Immigrants from the Aegean Sea, and the Southern Greek islands settled in Palestine around 1200 B.C. and mixed with its local people. The new immigrants were known as the Philistines, and the current name of the land, "Palestine", is derived from their name.

Jews came to Palestine around 1200 B.C. and managed to establish their rule for sometime over the local people. However, their rule ended soon at the hands of the Assyrians and the Babylonians who destroyed the Jewish Kingdoms and transferred their population to Mesopotamia and Persia. During the Byzantine rule some Greeks settled in Palestine and integrated with the local people. Muslims came later on

and brought with them some Arab immigrants from the tribes that participated in opening the area for Muslim rule (conquering the area). Subsequently, during the time of the Crusades, some Crusaders took advantage of Saladin's offer to stay unarmed, and settled there. During the long period of Muslim rule, many Turks, Kurds, Chechens, Bosnians, Sudanese and Moroccans came as visitors to Palestine, but they were so attracted by the beauty of the country that they decided to stay in. This mosaic of people, form the ancestors of today's Palestinians, elements of these groups are present in today's Palestinian people in varying degrees. Historians today trace the overwhelming majority of Palestinians, especially villagers, to the Canaanites, the Philistines and the Arab tribes.

Under the shadow of Muslim rule, a Palestinian and non-Palestinian Christian minority lived in Palestine for a long time, safely and tranquilly. Furthermore, Islamic tolerance embraced Jews too; they were deemed *Dhimmis* (Non-Muslims living in and under the protection of a Muslim state). They were a small minority with no political aims. The evidence for that is their number at the very beginning of the 19th century that did not exceed 5000. However, it reached 23000 immediately before intensive immigration to Palestine (around 1880.)

Contemporary Composition

Exactly like their lands, Palestinian people are today scattered across the borders of their catastrophes. While other peoples present their composition in terms of religious and ethnic groups, the Palestinians of today, as a homeless people, base their presence on the place of their residence, particularly so on two major historical, but catastrophic

events, namely the wars of 1948 and 1967. Each war resulted in two groups: those who left and those who remained. The Palestinian people are thus divided into:

1. Palestinians of 1948 or Arabs of "Israel"

They are the Palestinians who managed to stay in their homes and came under "Israeli" rule after the 1948 war. They numbered only 156,000, while the rest fled their homes in quest of safety. Since the new lords of the land named it "Israel", those Palestinians became known as the "Arabs of Israel", who hold "Israeli" passports, but are considered second-class "Israeli" citizens. Their number was estimated to be 1,230,000 people in 2002.

2. Palestinian Refugees

Generally, when the word "refugees" is used, it refers to those displaced in the year 1948. The 1948 war, which took the form of ethnic cleansing, led to the displacement of 726,000 Palestinian refugees directly after the war, who had sharply increased to 900,000 in the following months. The total number of those refugees today (2002) is estimated at 5,000,000 who are dispersed in Jordan, Syria, and Lebanon, while others went to Palestinian areas that were not occupied in the 1948 war. Though the latter nominally live in Palestine, they are practically refugees because the place they call home has been taken by "Israel" (and given to Jewish immigrants who now call it home!). Thus, when we say that the population of the West Bank and Gaza is 3,485,000 we have to remember that around 1.6 million of them are refugees waiting to go home.

3. The Palestinians of 1967

The Palestinians of 1967 or "the Palestinian insiders" are those who still live inside their land. Today they total around 1,885,000 (2002 est.). They, together with part of the refugees who came from lands occupied in 1948 (1.6 millions), form the population of the West Bank and Gaza Strip. These are the people who are suffering from direct military occupation, and who gallantly stood against oppression in the first and second intifadas.

4. Displaced Persons

Palestinians who were forced to leave after the 1967 war are called displaced persons to distinguish them from those who left in 1948. However, both are refugees who cannot access their home. Yet, among the displaced persons, there are "refugees" of those who fled in 1948 to other Palestinian areas that had not then fallen under occupation, but were subsequently forced to leave again when these lands were occupied. Thus, they were first expelled as refugees, then as displaced. No matter what "technical" name is given to them, they witnessed the journey of misery twice in a lifetime! The displaced persons directly after the war were 330,000, and the number is estimated today around 1 million.

The Palestinian refugees who live outside Palestine, together with the displaced persons, form one group that is the Palestinians in the diaspora, who cannot go to any part of Palestine, be it home or not. We have mentioned here many classifications that you might find tiring to understand, yet, they are much more difficult to experienced.

After this discussion, it is clear that only 2.7 million Palestinians (out of 9.5) live in their real homes, the rest are

refugees in one form or another, with different technical titles, and varying distance from home. Those who live inside Palestine are a bit closer to home but not at home, while those who live in Jordan are away from the whole geographical territory of their homeland. Geographically, the Palestinians are scattered in three major localities:

a. Those living inside the lands occupied in 1948 (category 1 above) who are about 1,230,000 and constitute 12.89% of the total Palestinian population.

b. The Palestinians living in the Palestinian lands occupied in 1967 (category 3 and part of category 2 above). They are 3,485,000 or 36.51% of the total Palestinian population.

c. The Palestinians living outside Palestine (category 4 and part of category 2 above), about 4,830,000 or 50.6% of the total Palestinian population.

The total number of Palestinians worldwide is estimated to be 9,545,000. Among them only 2.85 millions. (29.9%) live in their real homes (census 2002). In presenting this section we will follow the second geographical division according to place of residence, which forms the major determinant of the type of life Palestinians have.

Important Note

It is important to note here that due to the dispersion of the Palestinians across many countries, we do not have exact figures of their numbers, and all what we give in this section are the most reliable estimations. Palestinian people generally have a high level of population growth, around 3.5% yearly, which is considered among the highest in the world. It is an average of the growth rate in most Palestinian communities:

in Gaza (4%), West Bank (3.48%), Jordan (generally 3%, but higher in the Palestinian camps), Syria (generally 2.54%, but higher in the Palestinian camps) and Lebanon (generally 1.38%, but higher in the Palestinian camps), and most estimations are based on this growth rate. Palestinian women also have a high fertility rate; in Gaza, for example, it is 6.42 children per woman, the highest rate in the world. Despite, or may be because of, their misery, Palestinians have a high rate of literacy (over 90%) and around 40% of them are in schools today.

Palestinians Living in Territories Occupied in 1948

After the war of 1948, around 56,000 Palestinians managed to escape ethnic cleansing and stay at home. However, "home" was no longer the same, it is now called "Israel" where they now form a minority for the first time in their history. After the war, the Palestinian social structure was shattered, and almost 500 villages were destroyed and deserted. Besides, these Palestinians were transferred within "Israel" from their original territory to other towns in order to deprive them of their property. However, the Israeli entity denies all these facts. They further endeavored to prove the myth of the "nationless land" through preventing any publication tackles this point.

How does the "Israeli" society deal with them?

Palestinians who remained inside "Israel" are seen as aliens who do not belong to the land, as they practice a different religion and culture; indeed they represent the enemy. For many "Israelis", those Palestinians are considered an internal threat to "Israeli" security, thus they are not comfortable with their presence. Besides, Palestinians inside "Israel" remind them of the 1948 "independence war" that most "Israelis" see as their founding legend. Palestinians in "Israel" are living witnesses for the other side of this heroic legend: an ugly ethnic cleansing and inhumane transfer. Palestinian villages and towns that were not converted into

"Israeli" settlements were completely destroyed, their houses, mosques and even graves, all had to vanish in order to conceal the moral challenge that faces the founding legend of the "Israeli" society.

Based on the above, Palestinians are subjected to policies that pursue the following:

- Adopting laws that make Palestinians feel like aliens and second class citizens.
- Subjecting them to severe economic and security pressures to force them to leave.
- Confiscating their properties and the Islamic endowment (*Waqf*) properties.
- Trying to change their Arab Muslim identity and isolate them from the neighboring Muslim Arab environment.

Arab villages and districts were put under military administration, and declared closed military zones. Anybody who wishes to go in or out, even inhabitants of those areas, should obtain permission from the military governor. Curfew was imposed on these villages after 7 p.m. and those who did not obey were in danger of being shot. Indeed, during the 1956 Suez War, a total curfew was imposed on all these villages because their loyalty was severely doubted in the case of the "Israeli" attack on Egypt that year. The curfew, however, was not communicated to the people of the Arab village of Kafr Qasem. Unknowingly, Arab farmers went to their work as usual, but when they came back they found "Israeli" guns awaiting them, and 49 people were killed in this massacre. The "Israeli" officer in charge of this massacre was tried in court and convicted for "negligence of duty", but

he was ridiculously fined one "Israeli" penny (Agora), and the case was closed! "Israel" stopped working by this system in 1966, but discrimination against Arabs is still evident.

Living Conditions

The outcome of these laws and practices was severe and far-reaching, but this did not attract the world's attention because they were enacted gradually and discreetly. The average land ownership for Palestinian individuals was 19 *dunams* (1 *dunam* = 1000 m^2) in 1945; it went down to 3.4 in 1950 and to 0.84 in 1981. Currently, more than 90% of the land inside "Israel" is closed to any form of Arab access; most of it is considered government land, and allocated to Jewish citizens. Palestinians resisted these policies in many uprisings of which the most famous was the revolt of 30 March 1976 in which 6 Palestinians were killed. This memorable day is known as the "Land's Day", and is a national day for all Palestinians.

Besides deprivation of properties, outcome of these discriminatory policies against Palestinians can be seen in all social spheres: government contribution to treasuries of local municipal councils in Jewish areas is 5 times more than in its Palestinian counterpart areas; subsidies given to "Israeli" farmers is 100 times more than those given to Arab farmers; among the 5000 university professors in "Israel" only 10 are Palestinians. Though the Palestinians represent 18.7% of the population of "Israel", only 5-8% of students at "Israeli" universities are Arabs. Among the 2400 executives in government-owned companies only one is Palestinian; among the 600 general managers of publicly owned "Israeli" factories none is Palestinian; among the 1860 high ranking civil servants in the "Israeli" governmental body, 26 are

Arabs and they work only in Islamic and Arab affairs offices; among the 20 towns in "Israel" that lack healthcare centers, 19 are Palestinians, and until 1976 there was only one Palestinian village provided with a drainage system. Besides all this injustice, "Israeli" laws associate many privileges and subsidies with military conscription: and those who do not enroll in the military service are denied most of these privileges. Since the Palestinians form most of this group (Palestinians do not serve in the army by virtue of an agreement, between the Palestinians and the Zionists), they are automatically deprived of them. Furthermore, the civil infrastructure in most Arab areas is neglected; electricity, water and communication services are unreliable. 48% of Arabs live below the poverty line and the rate of unemployment among them is 22%, (while the total unemployment rate in "Israel" was 9.2%). Furthermore, "Israel" encourages the operations of emigration service offices to facilitate the emigration of those Palestinians to Western countries.

When confronted with these facts, the Zionist traditional response is that Palestinians in "Israel" are better off than those in neighboring Arab countries. Of course if one compares a poor person in a country with per capita GDP of 18900, like "Israel", with a middle class person in a country with per capita GDP of 3600, like Jordan, the former will be considered rich! But in his own society he is still poor, and suffers deprivation. The same futile argument is given with regard to discrimination, i.e. one of the few places in the Middle East where Arabs have the right to vote is "Israel". But what sort of equality does voting provide when one is overburdened with all the above malevolence?

Facts about the Palestinians Living in "Israel"

This category of Palestinians is officially estimated to be 1,230,000 people, i.e. 18.7% of "Israeli" population, though independent sources estimate them to be 19.5%. Among them 77% are Sunni Muslims, 13% Christians and 10% Druze. They managed to get 10 seats in the Knesset representing the Arab parties of Hadash, Democratic Arab Party and Balad. Another main Palestinian political movement in "Israel" is the Islamic Movement, led by Sheikh Ra'ed Salah, which does not participate in "Israeli" elections because it views this to be an approval of the occupation, though one of its wings does participate in these elections. The Islamic Movement won the municipal elections in 8 major Arab municipalities, receiving 28.6% of the total vote. Many "Israeli" politicians see this movement as a grave danger that has to be criminalized and uprooted immediately. During the intifada of Al-Aqsa, Arab political figures were targeted, an attempt was made to assassinate Sheikh Ra'ed Salah. Azmi Bshara, a member of the Knesset and the leader of Balad was prosecuted in court for his statements against "Israeli" policies in the West Bank and Gaza Strip.

Palestinians in Territories Occupied in 1967

The 1948 war left the Palestinians with around 23% of their land divided into two geographical units; the West Bank (5876 km^2) and the Gaza Strip (363 km^2), while the rest of the land was expropriated by the newly-declared Zionist state of "Israel". In 1967, this remaining part fell under "Israeli" occupation. Before the war of 1948, the population of the West Bank was estimated to be 400,000 that increased after the war to 680,000, following the influx of 280,000 scared refugees who settled in 21 camps across the West Bank, while the rest of the refugees continued their way to farther destinations in Jordan. Available resources did not allow the absorption of this huge number of property-less refugees, and the inevitable result was that many of them had to migrate to richer countries, especially Arab Gulf countries, in their quest for a better life. Despite this immigration, the number progressively increased until it reached 870,000 on the eve of the Arab-"Israeli" war of 1967. After this war, the number, however, dropped to 665,000; around 205,000 people were expelled from the West Bank and denied access to their homes in this second Palestinian catastrophe, some of them were already refugees away from home, and the only change for them was moving to a farther camp, and the journey of tears happened again.

The situation in the Gaza Strip was even worse. This area of 363 km^2 was populated before the 1948 war by 75,000 only, but after the war it became 200,000, with the influx of refugees who settled in 8 camps. In 1950 the figure rose to 280,000, far beyond what the small area could absorb in such a short time. Among those 280,000 69% were refugees. Miserable life conditions drove these refugees to migrate again to richer areas of the Arab World, and by 1967 the population reached 455,000 of whom 59% were refugees. After the 1967 war, the population decreased to 354,000.

101,000 Palestinians, mostly refugees, were expelled and denied access to their land or even their camps. All in all, immediately after the 1967 war, the number of displaced persons was 306,000.

All those displaced during the different phases of the Palestinian exodus suffered almost the same miserable life conditions: they lived in concentration camps, an average of 10 people sharing one tent to protect them from the hot summers and the cold winters. After both wars, the Palestinian refugees continued to live in tents for around 10 years under the same guise, namely they are temporary refugees who shall return home soon, thus they should not be allowed to settle. The irony is that this "temporary" condition continues until today!

"Israeli" Policies towards the Palestinians:

From the first moment, the Zionists realized that this high Arab population density threatens Zionist expansionist ambitions in both areas. Thus they aimed in the first place to stop the population growth, and secondly to expose the Palestinians to extremely difficult conditions that will compel

them to leave voluntarily. These policies were based mainly on the following:

- Terrorizing the inhabitants through military checkpoints, ambushes, administrative detention and torture.
- Creating difficult economic, political and social conditions for them.
- Belittling and humiliating the inhabitants by subjecting them to the mockery of the "Israeli" soldiers. It is very common for an "Israeli" soldier to ask a Palestinian, under the threat of rifles, to tie or clean his shoes, or to imitate dogs and pigs if he wanted to pass through the checkpoint to work.
- Trying to spread social illnesses such as drugs and prostitution in Palestinian society, especially among the youth.
- Confiscating arable and most fertile lands to deprive Palestinian farmers from their major source of income. Concurrently they flood the market with "Israeli" products at cost rates that make local products uncompetitive. As a result, many Palestinian farms and businesses were abandoned, and their owners became cheap labor for growing "Israeli" investment.
- Building settlements on Palestinian lands to cut its geographic and demographic continuity, and to exploit the resources of the West Bank for the interests of the Jewish population.

Quiet deportation of the Palestinians of Al-Quds, the Jerusalemites, in order to achieve Jewish demographic

superiority in the city, which "Israel" claims as its only and eternal capital.

- Encouraging illiteracy among the Palestinians by disrupting all institutions of education.
- Executing these policies, "Israel" placed the West Bank and Gaza Strip under a military governor who held all executive and legislative authorities, and had a strong influence on the military courts that were set up especially for the Palestinians. The governor became the ultimate authority in the West Bank and Gaza Strip, and any law that he issued was to be compulsory and with immediate effect. Two days after the war, on 7 June 1967, he issued a military communiqué that placed the Palestinian affairs under his mercy, namely: "all legislative and executive powers shall be confined to me and to those whom I appoint".

Since that time, "Israel" confiscated around 43% of lands in the West Bank and Gaza Strip for Jewish settlement and military purposes. 160 settlements were established in the West Bank and another 16 in the Gaza Strip, which housed 176,000 settlers, excluding those in Al-Quds (Jerusalem). Most of these settlements were placed in strategic areas, hilltops and around Palestinian towns and cities to block their natural expansion.

The military governor controlled all water resources in the West Bank and Gaza, and prohibited digging new wells or expanding existing ones without his prior approval. If we take the year 1990 as an example, we find that only 17% of the utilized underground water in the West Bank was allocated to the Palestinians, while the rest, 83%, went to Jewish settlers

and to "Israel" (Palestinian population in that year was 1.7 million while the Jewish settlers were 76,000 only). The military governor issued a law preventing Palestinian farmers from having more than 6% of their lands irrigated while the quota for the settlers was 69%. The water allocated for a Palestinian individual was 127 m^3 yearly while a settler got 1600 m^3, (more than 12 times that of the Palestinian quota). Even after the Oslo Agreement, and the ongoing Peace Process, all water resources in the West Bank remained under "Israeli" control, as this issue was shelved in this agreement. However, the Zionists kept their right to prohibit digging any well without their permission. The minister of Agriculture Nabil ash-Sharif stated that he kept persuading the Israeli negotiator to dig only one well near the city of Jenin yet, he rejected. At the same time high taxes were imposed on Palestinian farmers to force them to abandon their lands and become cheap laborers in "Israeli" factories.

Due to these practices, during the period before the first intifada (1987-1993) almost 39% of the Palestinian workforce used to work in "Israel", a development that made the economy of the West Bank and Gaza Strip highly dependent on the "Israeli" economy. However, the situation changed during the intifada as the Palestinians managed to restructure their economy, and only 12.3% of their workforce continued to be dependent on "Israel". After Oslo, the Palestinian economy was bound again to the "Israeli" economy and currently, (2002), about 120,000 Palestinians work in "Israel" on a daily bases. On average each one of them supports 5 people, a situation that "Israel" uses to put political pressure, during and after the peace negotiations. Whenever a resistance operation takes place, authorities impose total closure on Palestinian entry to "Israel", leaving many families

without a source of income. Until now the Palestinian economy is almost totally controlled by "Israel", who controls all borders, airports and seaports.

In the field of education, the military governor controlled appointment and dismissal of schoolteachers, and maintained close surveillance over school activities. Before the establishment of the Palestinian National Authority (PNA) the West Bank adopted the Jordanian curriculum while Gaza followed the Egyptian one, however, school textbooks needed the approval of the military governor, who, for example, banned 9 out of 27 textbooks for the elementary level and 8 out of 20 for the preliminary level. During the years of military administration (1967-1994) not a single new school was opened, notwithstanding the substantial increase in the population. On the contrary, the number of public schools decreased from 884 in 1967 to 790 in 1979. Furthermore, no full time librarian or laboratory assistant was appointed in any Palestinian school during that time, and all extra-curricular activities were cancelled. The military governor interfered in the affairs of Palestinian universities that were frequently closed down by his orders: Beir Zeit University was closed for 5 months in 1982, while Annajah University was closed for 4 months in each of the years 1983 and 1984 and for two months in 1985. These arbitrary closures increased dramatically during the intifada. "Israeli" authorities have also systematically worked to deprive these universities from their financial sources, a development that threatened their continuity for a long time. Until today, the Arab University of Al-Quds; the only Arab university in the occupied city, is facing closure threats for financial reasons, and it is launching campaigns for donations. In addition, the "Israeli" military governor issued a long list of books, about 1600 titles, that

were banned in the West Bank and Gaza, mostly on Palestinian culture and history.

Nonetheless, all these obstacles did not suppress the Palestinians' passion for knowledge, they still managed to establish 10 universities (8 in West Bank and 2 in Gaza), with 20,500 Palestinian students by the end of the first intifada, in the academic year 1992/1993, that increased to 67,000 in 2001/2002. After the intifada, and the subsequent establishment of the Palestinian National Authority, the number of schools increased, in 1997/1998, to 1175 public schools 265 UNRWA, 171 private schools, and 789 kindergartens.

Healthcare services faced similar obstacles during "Israeli" military rule. Despite the massive increase in population, the number of public hospitals decreased from 14 in 1967 to 10 in 1993, and healthcare budget allocated by the "Israeli" administration to the occupied territories was 2% only of the total "Israeli" healthcare budget. For example, it amounted in the West Bank to 10 million U.S. dollars only in 1990, which is equal to 15% of the budget of one of the major hospitals in Tel Aviv! Some positive changes have, however, taken place after the establishment of the Palestinian National Authority.

All these policies did not, however, manage in achieving their ultimate goal. The Palestinians did not desert their lands, and their numbers are, in fact, still increasing by more than double the "Israeli" rate. In 2001, the population of the West Bank was estimated at 2,230,000, with an average growth rate of 3.48%, while that of Gaza totaled about 1,255,000, with a growth rate of 4%, thus the total population of the Palestinian occupied territories was in 2002 around 3,485,000, and is expected to reach 3,850,000 in 2005.

Palestinians in the Diaspora

The Palestinian Diaspora

The Palestinian catastrophes of 1948 and 1967 compelled huge numbers of Palestinians to leave their homes. However, this postwar refugee population was not the only wave that was denied access to home, as many other Palestinians left during the years of occupation to Arab countries, especially to the Gulf States, in quest of better incomes to support their families. But the "Israeli" authorities denied them the right to return under the pretext that they were not counted in the "Israeli" administered census. This complicated composition added to the difficulty of having reliable figures of the Palestinian population in the diaspora that had, however, reached, according to most reliable estimates, 4,830,000 in 2002.

The magnitude of the Palestinian tragedy might be better understood if we take into account that among the 9,545,000 Palestinians worldwide only 2,850,000 live in their original homes, and only 4,715,000 live inside the geographical area of Palestine, either inside "Israel" or under occupation in the West Bank and Gaza Strip. Since their first exodus in 1948, Palestinian refugees formed the largest world refugee population, and, as time passed, they became the oldest as well. In 1950, the U.N. established a body to ease their misery and work for absorbing their huge numbers that flooded neighboring areas. This organization, UNRWA (United

Nations Relief and Work Agency for Refugees in the Near East), was established by Resolution 302, and is continuing to provide its services to this day. It is currently serving 3.6 million Palestinian refugees, though, since the signature of the Oslo Accord that initiated the peace process, UNRWA services and financial capabilities shrank by 30-35% on the assumption of the donors that their problem was "almost solved".

Palestinians in Neighboring Countries

During their exodus, scared Palestinian refugees tried to settle in the nearest safe areas to maintain a way back, and a hope for return. Most refugees traveled east to the East Bank of the Jordan River, while some traveled north to Lebanon and Syria, and few went west to the Gaza Strip. Consequently, most of the Palestinian population outside Palestine is currently located in neighboring countries.

Jordan: The largest Palestinian population outside Palestine is located in Jordan that hosts 2,661,000 Palestinians. Jordan has officially awarded the Palestinians full citizenship rights by which they may own, trade, work, learn, get healthcare and participate in political life, especially after the constitutional unification of Jordan and the West Bank in 1950. During the unification period, almost half of the members of Parliament were elected from the West Bank, and some Palestinians were appointed to the premiership. However, the relationship between the Palestinians and Jordanian regime had its ups and downs depending on the latter's relationship with the leadership of the PLO. But on the whole, this relationship was characterized with tension that stemmed from conflict over the political representation of

the Palestinian people. After declaring unification and overtaking the administration of most of the Palestinian unoccupied land and population in 1948, the Jordanian regime assumed itself to be the legitimate representative of the Palestinians. It tried to turn this issue into an internal national concern by insisting that the West Bank is an integral part of Jordan. The PLO, however, viewed the issue from a totally different lens. It argued that the major cause of the continuous failure in preserving Palestinians' rights was that they were always represented by Arab neighbors who had their own national political entities, and gave priority to their political interests and used the Palestinian cause against their Arab rivals. Palestinians should no more be represented by any Arab neighbor, they are, indeed, more than capable of representing themselves.

This Jordanian-Palestinian tension had, however, officially ended as late as 1988 when King Hussein revoked the unification and accepted the overwhelming trend that recognized the PLO as the only legitimate representative of the Palestinians. This tension had, however, reached its most bitter climax during a bloody fight in 1970-71 over the existence of the PLO's resistance military bases in Jordan, that ultimately led to their closure. In the Jordanian parliamentary election of 1997 only 13 out of 80 members were Palestinians, although the Palestinians in the country are estimated to be 60% of the population. There are 10 poorly equipped refugee camps in Jordan that host 247,816 people, about 18.2% of the country's refugee population registered with UNRWA in 1999.

Lebanon: The living conditions of the Palestinian refugees in Lebanon are the worst amongst the Palestinian refugees

scattered around the world. After the 1948 war, 100,000 Palestinians, mainly from north Palestine, migrated to Lebanon and settled in 15 refugee camps. However, the religious-based (sectarian) political system in Lebanon made the Palestinians unwelcomed guests, especially for the Christian Maronite minority who controlled many of the major political positions, including the presidency. Lebanese society is composed mainly of Sunni Muslims, Shiite Muslims, Druze and Maronite Christians. The influx of the predominantly Sunni Palestinians boosted the power of their Lebanese co-religionists, and therefore diluted the overwhelming power of the Maronite minority. Though the Palestinian refugees insisted that they wanted to maintain a refugee status in Lebanon, from which they can prepare and start their struggle for return, the Lebanese politicians viewed their presence as a part of the internal game of power.

Due to this political consideration, the Lebanese authorities deliberately pursued a policy that maintained the harsh living conditions for these miserable Palestinians, believing that this was the most effective way to maintain their focus towards their home. They were granted the "Lebanese Travel Document for Palestinian Refugees" that does not give them any political or civil rights inside Lebanon. Moreover, they were denied access to Lebanese citizenship, no matter how long they stay in Lebanon, and the right of political participation and employment in the civil service. Palestinians were denied 70 professions including practicing medicine, law, engineering and pharmacy. They neither have access to public schools nor to public healthcare centers. Palestinians were also not allowed to have concrete roofs in their houses, or more than one story houses. They have to maintain their "temporary" homes roofed with light metal covers in order

not to entertain the possibility of settling permanently in Lebanon. Their camps have no consistent water or electricity supply.

After the 1967 war that led to the loss of the rest of Palestine, the Palestinian resistance movement was activated as the Palestinians worldwide were convinced that they could no more depend on the vague promises made by the Arab states to liberate their land. In 1969 the Arabs and the PLO reached an agreement that granted the former the right to launch attacks on "Israel" from military bases in Lebanon. This Palestinian military presence resulted in massive "Israeli" attacks on both the Palestinians and the Lebanese infrastructures, which created internal opposition to the Palestinian presence. In 1978, a large-scale operation was launched to create a buffer security zone, and in 1982 another huge military campaign was launched to destroy the infrastructure of the PLO in Lebanon. The eruption of the civil war in Lebanon (1975-1990) between the hostile religious groups added to the complexity of the situation, especially as the Maronite militia strived to get rid of the Palestinians, who boosted the Sunni presence. Consequently, the PLO was dragged into the civil war to defend the Palestinian camps attacked by the Maronite militias. "Israel" found a strong ally in these militias, and used them to commit the most infamous massacre in Palestinian history, namely Sabra and Shatila, in which 3297 Palestinian and Lebanese civilians were killed in both camps under "Israeli" protection and cover.

Continuous wars added to the sufferings of the refugees, especially by the "Israeli" military machine that chased them out and followed them to the north. Their camps were targets

for more than 3000 "Israeli" air raids during 1968-1974, and Al-Nabatiyyah refugee camp was completely devastated. In 1976 Maronite militias besieged Tal Al-Za`tar refugee camp for 53 days, and finally destroyed it completely, killing almost 3000 Palestinians. In 1978, an "Israeli" military campaign killed 2000 Lebanese and Palestinian civilians, while another in 1982 killed 19,000. Ain El-Helweh, the largest Palestinian camp, was completely destroyed and razed by "Israeli" bulldozers in an attempt to force its inhabitants to move farther to the north. But the Palestinians were back soon after the departure of the "Israeli" bulldozers, and they rebuilt their homes on the original site. The message was clear: the next journey will no more be northwards, but to one and only one direction, back home.

In 1985 a Lebanese Shiite militia named Amal, launched war on the Palestinian camps in an attempt to control them after the PLO, their protector, was forced out of Lebanon in 1982. Amal tightly besieged them for 2 years; and the lack of supplies forced the Palestinians to eat cats and dogs, and to drink wastewater. 2,500 Palestinian civilians were killed before the Camps War ended in 1987, yet Amal failed to control the Palestinian camps. The end of the Lebanese civil war in 1990 gave the Palestinians in Lebanon relative comfort after 20 years of bloodshed.

In the year 2002, the Palestinian refugees in Lebanon registered with UNRWA totaled 409,000 of whom 54% lived in the 12 refugee camps that remained after the war; the total number of Palestinians in Lebanon reached 450,000.

Due to the aforementioned Lebanese policy toward Palestinians, the unemployment rate among them reached 40%! Furthermore, 79% of the Palestinian families composed

of 3 or less members, fell below the poverty line, and this ratio increased to 96% among families composed of 4 and more members. These harsh living conditions created bitter feelings among the Palestinians towards their Arab neighbors who should have, at least, treated them like foreigners, and resulted in an increased emigration to destinations far away from home, to Western Europe, mainly Scandinavian countries, and to North America and Australia.

Syria: In Syria the story was different from that in Jordan and Lebanon. Palestinian refugees there did not suffer any military aggression, be it from "Israel" or from Syrian internal forces. Though not given citizenship, they were granted all the civil rights of Syrian citizens, and had access to public schools, different kinds of jobs, and the same kind of healthcare. No restrictions were imposed on the kind of homes they may build or the properties they may own. This, however, does not mean that the Syrian leadership did not have its ups and downs with the PLO. For most of the time, tension characterized the relationship between the two parties, sometimes leading to bloody military confrontation on Lebanese lands, particularly during the Lebanese civil war. However, Palestinian camps in Syria never went out of control.

The total number of Palestinians in Syria is estimated to be 505,000 Palestinians, less than 29% of them live in 10 refugee camps around Syria.

Egypt: Although Egypt is among the neighboring countries, only a small number of Palestinians live on its lands, around 49,000, who went there voluntarily and not as refugees of war. However, the Gaza Strip, which accommodates a large number of refugees, was placed under

Egyptian control during 1948-1967, but was never incorporated into Egypt. Its inhabitants were given the "Egyptian Travel Document for Palestinian Refugees" that did not guarantee its holders any kind of civil rights, and did not allow them to live in Egyptian territories.

Palestinian Refugees in other Arab Countries

Outside the neighboring countries, the largest Palestinian community used to live in Kuwait, about 430,000 before the Gulf War (1990). Palestinian expertise played a major role in the development of this country, and was given access to all kinds of jobs.

Kuwait at that time enjoyed high standards of freedom compared to other Arab countries, a privilege that activated the Palestinians politically. Consequently, the first Palestinian political organization, Fateh, was established in Kuwait by a group of young Palestinian activists living there. Palestinians in Kuwait had generally enjoyed better living conditions than those living in Jordan, Lebanon, Syria or Egypt. As they worked in professional fields and in the civil service, the Palestinians constituted a kind of middle-lower class in Kuwait. However, in the 1980s, the Kuwaiti government imposed restrictions on foreign experts, including Palestinians. The Second Gulf War of 1990 had disastrous consequences on the Palestinian population in Kuwait as 200,000 of them fled the country following the Iraqi invasion. After the war, and the return of the Kuwaitis, another 200,000 were forced to quit due to the harsh living conditions they were subjected to in retaliation for the PLO's pro-Iraqi stand in the war.

Other smaller Palestinian communities, who lived in the Arab Gulf countries, suffered more or less the same destiny. The conditions of the Palestinian community in Libya varied due to the ever-changing stand of the Libyan leadership towards the PLO. After the signature of the Oslo Accord, and as a sign of rejecting the accord, the Libyan president ordered the Palestinians (around 35,000) to leave the country in 24 hours and return to their original homes in Palestine as 'they were then in peace with Israel'. Those who failed to flee the country were placed in concentration camps in the Saharan Desert at border points with Tunisia and Egypt.

Resettlement Projects

Since their first exodus, Palestinian refugees formed the human core of the struggle, and no peace settlement is at all possible without addressing their plight properly. Consequently many attempts were made to settle them outside their occupied lands that formed the territory of the newly-established "State of Israel". Until 2002, 243 resettlement projects were proposed in this context, but have all failed because they were rejected by the Palestinian people.

These projects suggested different scenarios of resettlement based on the prevailing political conditions. Some of them suggested settling the refugees evenly in Iraq, Syria and Lebanon; others wanted Jordan to be the "Alternative Home" for the Palestinians, where they will establish their state. A third trend proposed resettling them in Sinai, while others suggested to scatter them around the world, mainly in Jordan and Iraq, and the rest to certain donor countries in Western Europe and North America.

Latest referendum carried out in Syria indicated that 99% of the Palestinians rejected any resettlement outside Palestine, and 98% wanted it to be in their original towns or villages. Only 1% accepted going back to other areas of Palestine, namely the West Bank and Gaza Strip.

Until the last round of the final settlement negotiations, "Israel" maintained an adamant position that rejected the responsibility for the expulsion of the Palestinians and rejected their right to return. At Camp David, in July 2000, the "Israeli" Prime Minister refused any kind of discussion over returning the Palestinians to their original homes inside "Israeli" territory, and proposed other resettlement plans in the West Bank, Gaza Strip and neighboring countries, mainly Jordan.

Massacres Against the Palestinian People

Right from the beginning, Zionism held terrorism as one of its indispensable weapons for the achievement of its dream in a Jewish homeland in Palestine. This meant forcing its people to leave, and those who will not, will eventually die until the demographic balance favors the Jewish population. The U.N. partition plan, embodied in Resolution 181, proposed a Jewish State to house 498,000 Jews and 497,000 Arab Palestinians, which clearly indicated that it will not be an exclusively Jewish state, especially because of the high population growth rate among the Palestinians, around 10% at that time. The only way for achieving the Zionist dream was thus to forcibly compel these Arab inhabitants to leave as they have adamantly insisted not to quit voluntarily. The 1948 war was the darkest page in this history of bloodshed in which more than 13,000 Palestinian civilians were killed in 34 massacres around Palestine and about another 900,000 were forced to flee, 94% of them under direct threats of death. Below are some of the most tragically remembered massacres as recorded in some important testimonies:

The Massacre at Baldat al-Shaikh (Dec. 31, 1947)

As the world was preparing to welcome the New Year, Hagana gang members stormed the village of Baldat al-Shaikh (now under the Zionist name Tell Ghanan) in pursuit of unarmed citizens, and in order to foment an atmosphere of

fear, that will trigger others to flee. The death toll of this massacre reached approximately 600 people, whose bodies were mainly found inside the village houses.

The Massacre at Sacsac in Hebron (Feb. 14-15, 1948)

The Zionists attacked the village at midnight, and the frightened citizens sought refuge in their houses. The Zionist forces bombed 20 houses killing 150 trapped civilians.

The Massacre at Abu Kasr (March 31, 1948)

This massacre was carried out by terrorists from the Hagana armed organization, which subsequently became the nucleus of the Zionist Army. The massacre occurred during an armed attack and a series of explosion operations. The Zionist terrorists pursued the unarmed villagers who tried to flee from their homes.

The Massacre at Deir Yassin (April 10, 1948)

The Zionist gangs Stern, Irgun and Hagana raided the Arab village of Deir Yassin at 2:00 a.m., 10 April 1948. According to eyewitnesses, these terrorists killed everyone within shooting range, and subsequently threw bombs to destroy the houses along with everyone inside them. The terrorists of these notorious gangs searched the rubble to massacre everyone who remained alive inside the demolished houses.

The Zionist massacre continued until the afternoon of the same day. Before withdrawing from the village, the terrorists gathered together the remaining villagers and executed them in cold blood, including elderly people, women and children.

In describing the massacre, an eyewitness recounted, "A bride and groom at their final wedding celebration were the

first victims. First they were thrown down along with thirty-three of their neighbors, then they were forced to stand up against a wall and pelted with machine-gun fire with their hands tied."

Fahmi Zaydan, the only survivor of his family in this massacre, was twelve years old at that time. He recounted the plight of his family by saying, "The Jews ordered everybody in my family to stand up with their faces to the wall. Then they started opening fire on us. I was wounded in my side. Most of our kids managed to survive because we hid behind our families. But a bullet shattered the head of my sister Qadriya, who was four years old, and everybody else who was standing along the wall was killed, including my mother and father, my grandmother and grandfather, my maternal aunts and uncles, and some of their kids."

Halima Eid, a descendant of one of the largest families in Deir Yassin, was thirty years old at the time of the massacre. She recalled, "I saw a Jew who shot my brother's wife, Khaldiya, in the neck. She was about to give birth. Then he slashed her stomach open with a butcher knife. And when one of the women tried to get the baby out of the dead mother's womb, they killed her too. Her name was Aisha Radwan."

In another house, Hana' Khalil (16 years old at the time) saw a Jewish terrorist unsheathe a large knife and use it to slit open the body of her neighbor, Jamila Habash, from head to toe. Then he killed another neighbor, who belonged to family by the name of the Fathis, in the same manner and on the doorstep of the same house.

The same sort of atrocities were repeated in all houses. According to accounts obtained from survivors, female Jews belonging to the organizations Lehi and Itzel had also

participated in the massacre. Jacque de Renee, head of the Red Cross mission in Palestine in 1948, described the terrorists who carried out the massacre at Deir Yassin by saying, "They were young men and teenagers, male and female, bristling with arms (pistols, machine guns and hand grenades). [When I saw them], most of them were still spattered with blood, with huge daggers in their hands. A girl from one of the Jewish gangs, whose eyes looked as though they were still full of the crime, held out her hands still dripping with blood, swinging them back and forth as they were some sort of war medal."

He adds, "I went into one house and found it full of shattered furniture and splinters of all sorts ...When I was about to leave the place I heard the sound of moaning and sighing. As I looked for the source of the sound, I stumbled upon a small, warm foot. It belonged to a ten-year-old girl who had been maimed by a hand grenade, but who was still alive. When I began to pick her up, an "Israeli" officer tried to prevent me, but I pushed him out of the way! Then I continued my work. No one had been left alive except for two women, one of them an elderly woman who had hidden behind a pile of firewood. Of the 400 inhabitants of the village, forty escaped. The rest were slaughtered, indiscriminately and in cold blood."

Menachem Begin, former Prime Minister of "Israel", boasted about this massacre in one of his books by recording: "This operation had tremendous, unanticipated results. After hearing the news of Deir Yassin, the Arabs were panicked and began fleeing in terror. Out of a total of 800,000 Arabs, who had been living in the land of present-day "Israel", only 156,000 remained." And Begin finds fault with the Jewish

leaders who declared themselves innocent of the massacre, accusing them of hypocrisy.

Begin goes on to say that the massacre at Deir Yassin "brought about decisive victories on the battlefield." Other terrorists have said that "without Deir Yassin, it would not have been possible for "Israel" to come into existence." Like Itzel and Lehi, they continued to defend the massacre. In fact, Lehi proudly labeled the actions of its members at Deir Yasin as "a humanitarian duty".

The Massacre at Abu Shousha (May 14, 1948)

The massacre in the village of Abu Shousha, not far from Deir Yassin, began at dawn. It resulted in fifty victims, including men and women, elderly and very young, many of whom had had their heads beaten with axes. The soldiers of the Zionist Jav'ati brigade, which carried out the massacre, opened fire indiscriminately on everything that moved. Not even the livestock survived the massacre.

The Massacre at Al-Lid (Lydda) (July 11, 1948)

This massacre was carried out by a commando unit led by Moshe Dayan, a defense and foreign minister of "Israel" later on. The unit stormed the city in the evening amidst a torrent of artillery shells and heavy gunfire directed at everything that moved in the city streets. The Arab citizens took refuge from the attack in the Dahmash Mosque. But no sooner had the Zionist terrorists reached the mosque than they killed 176 civilians who took refuge there, raising the victims of this massacre to 426 Palestinians.

Once the slaughter had come to an end, the unarmed civilians were led to the city's sports stadium, where the

young men were detained. Then, the families were given a mere half-hour to leave the city for the area where the Jordanian Army was located. They were to go there on foot and without food or water, which caused the deaths of many women, children and elderly people.

The Massacre in the Village of Eilaboun (October 30, 1948)

The village was attacked on October 29, 1948 by "Israeli" forces, which clashed with a group of men from the Arab Rescue Army who were present in the village. The "Israeli" forces managed to enter the town at 5:00 a.m. on October 30, after the withdrawal of Rescue Army fighters. The inhabitants were ordered to gather in the city square, and were then fired at randomly from all four directions.

The Massacre in Ba'na and Deir al-Asad (October 31, 1948)

Zionist forces surrounded the two towns of Ba'nah and Deir al-Asad, and then overtook them on October 31, 1948 at 10:00 a.m. The forces' commander ordered through loudspeakers the inhabitants of the two villages to gather on the plain area located between the two villages under guard by Zionist soldiers, then killed a group of young men in a manner described by a UN observer as "brutal murder, since it took place without provocation or even an expression of anger on the part of the people."

The Massacre at Qibya (October 14, 1953)

After intensive artillery fire directed at the village's residents, units from the standing army of the Zionist entity

surrounded Qibya with a force of approximately 600 soldiers, that stormed the village, firing in all directions.

While one unit of the Zionist infantrymen, led by Ariel Sharon, pursued villagers with fire, other Zionist units placed explosives around some houses and blew them up together with their residents. According to eyewitnesses who survived the massacre, Zionist soldiers stationed themselves outside these houses, and fired on anyone who tried to flee. The fatalities of the massacre reached 67, including men, women and children, while hundreds were injured.

The massacre was followed by tragic scenes that are difficult to forget. Among these was the sight of a woman sitting on top of a pile of debris and looking forlornly into the sky. At the same time, one could see small hands and legs which were the remains of her six children, while her husband's bullet-mangled corpse lay on the road in front of her.

In his report to the meeting of the International Security Council on October 27, 1953, General Von Pinika, chief UN observer at that time, stated, "The attack had been planned, and was carried out by the regular "Israeli" forces."

The Massacre in the Town of Qalqiliya (October 10, 1956)

The Zionist army and a number of settlers attacked Qalqiliya, located along the green line which divided the Arab lands occupied in 1948 from the West Bank. Those who took part in the attack included an army detachment and an artillery battalion, along with ten fighter aircraft.

The Zionist army strafed the village with artillery fire before storming it, the death toll of the massacre exceeded 70.

The Massacre at Kafr Qasim (October 29, 1956)

During the 1956 war, the Zionist administration imposed a curfew on all Arab towns and villages, including the village of Kafr Qasim. The curfew was communicated late to the village and a number of children and elderly people took off to inform the young men, then working in the fields outside the village, about it. But the "Israeli" forces stationed outside the village, killed them all in cold blood, before reaching the village. The death toll was 49 civilians, including a number of children and elderly people.

The Massacre at Khan Yunus (November 3, 1956)

During the war of 1956, which resulted in the occupation of Gaza for sometime, the Zionist army carried out a massacre against the Palestinians in Khan Yunus refugee camp south of Gaza City, in which 250 Palestinians were killed.

Nine days later (on November 12, 1956), a unit of the Zionist army carried out another massacre in which more than 275 civilians were killed in the same camp. On the same day, the Zionist terrorists killed over hundred more Palestinians in the Rafah refugee camp.

The Massacre at Sabra and Shatila (September 16-18, 1982)

Before sunset on Thursday, 16 September 1982, Maronite Christian forces, covered by units of the "Israeli" invasion army, stormed the camps of Sabra and Shatila in Beirut. The

massacre continued for approximately 36 hours. During the operation, the "Israeli" army surrounded the camps, preventing anyone from entering or leaving. In addition, the "Israeli" soldiers provided the militia with logistic support, including setting off incandescent bombs at night to facilitate the militia's mission.

Information about the massacre began to leak out after a number of children and women fled to the Gaza hospital in the Shatila camp, and informed the doctors of what was happening. Likewise, news of the massacre reached some foreign journalists on Friday morning, 17 September 1982, but the bloodbath went on until Saturday noon, September 18. 3297 Palestinian civilians were killed in the massacre.

The massacre was carried out under the supervision of Ariel Sharon, then the Defense minister and the architect of the invasion. But the "Israeli" military court that investigated the massacre shamelessly claimed, "that the General's commands were misunderstood", and ridiculously fined him an equivalent of 14 American cents!

Umm Ghazi Younes Madhi, one of the survivors of the massacre, said, "They stormed the camp at 5:30 on September 16. We did not hear any gunfire at first, since they were killing people with axes and knives. They would bury the people alive with bulldozers. We ran away barefooted with bullets on our heels. They slaughtered my husband and three of my children in the massacre. They killed my husband in the bedroom with one of the children. I saw them slaughtering a pregnant woman with her husband. My niece came out of the house and they grabbed her and slaughtered her in the street. They did the same thing to her small son, who was in her arms."

Munir Ahmad al-Doukhi, who at that time was 13 years old, survived three attempts to take his life. He says, "I had been placed under the responsibility of armed men wearing filthy clothes, and who did not speak Arabic well. With me was a group of women and children who had been dragged out of their houses. They fired on the women and children, and I was injured in my right foot. My mother was wounded in her shoulder and in her leg. When they asked the wounded to stand up so that they could take them to the hospital, I pretended to be dead. Then they fired on them all over again. So that's how I survived the second attempt to kill me. But my mother had already died. And on the morning of the next day, they shot at me when they found out that I was still alive. They wounded me and thought I was dead, so they left me alone."

Sumaya Qasim Bashir says, "My husband and my son were killed in the massacre. The most horrible sight I saw was the sight of our neighbor, Hajja Munira Amr. First they slaughtered her four-month-old child before her eyes, then they slaughtered her."

An American nurse by the name of Jill Drew tells of an eyewitness who said that they tied up the children, and then slaughtered them like sheep in the Sabra and Shatila camps. They would line people up in the sports stadium, then form firing squads to shoot them dead.

Ali Khalil Afana, who was 12 years old at the time, says, "It was 11:30. We heard the sound of a big explosion. It was followed by a woman's voice, then all of a sudden they broke into our house. They came rushing to us like wolves, searching the rooms. My mother screamed for help, and they rained her with bullets. My father reached out his hand in

search of something to defend himself with. But their bullets were too fast for him. I did not have enough strength to scream, since they had fallen on me with knives. I do not know what happened after that. But I found myself in the hospital the way you see me now: with my head and my legs all wrapped up. A classmate of mine who was visiting his mother in the hospital told me that our house was nothing but a pile of rubble. My aunt came to visit me yesterday, so I asked her what had happened to my three brothers. But she did not answer me! They were all dead. I know it." And with that, hot tears rolled down his little cheeks.

A woman from Sabra camp tells her story by saying "I, my husband, and my baby, were about to sleep on 15 September at night, after we had finished straightening up the things that had been destroyed by the bombing. At that time we were feeling reassured because the Lebanese - or so we thought - were surrounding the camp. But the horrors were approaching, because not long after this scores of soldiers and fighters came in shooting and blowing up the houses. We went out to see what was going on, and when we saw what we saw, we tried to run away. But they stopped us. They pushed my husband, my father and my brother toward a wall and stood them up with their backs to it. Then they made them raise their hands and showered them with a torrent of bullets, and they fell down dead. When my mother and I screamed, they pulled us by the hair toward a deep hole that had been caused by a missile. But just then they received orders to move somewhere else, so they left without firing on us. Then we fled."

Another woman speaks of how they came into her house when a neighbor boy was visiting her. They fell upon him

with an axe and split his head in two. She says, "When I screamed, they tied me up with a rope that they had with them. Then they threw me onto the floor and three of them took turns raping me. By the time they left I was unconscious, and when I finally woke up, I was in a civil defense ambulance."

Some militiamen would crush Palestinians to death under the wheels of their military vehicles. And at the same time they would make the sign of the cross over bodies of the victims. A Danish television cameraman by the name of Pederson filmed a number of army trucks filled with women, children and elderly people, headed toward some unknown destination.

People in Sabra and Shatila were killed indiscriminately, and a large number of women were raped. There were many people who raised white flags as a sign of surrender, especially children and women. However, they were among the first victims of the massacre. Among them were more than fifty women who went to surrender, but were all killed.

The attack on the Akka (Acre) hospital took place on Friday morning at 11:30. It involved the murder of doctors and patients. A Palestinian nurse by the name of Intisar Isma'il (19 years old), whose disfigured corpse was found later, was raped ten times, then killed. The attackers killed many sick and wounded, as well as some of the hospital workers and local residents who had come to the hospital for refuge. Then they forced forty patients to get into trucks. They were not seen again. During the massacre, the terrorists killed physicians Ali Uthman and Samiya al-Khatib inside the hospital. And they emptied their cartridges into the head of a

fourteen-year-old wounded boy named Muwaffaq As`ad as he lay in bed.

Bulldozers set about digging mass graves in broad daylight in south Shatila with the help of the "Israelis".

Roberto Soro, a Beirut correspondent for the American magazine *The Time*, relates what he saw after entering the camps as follows, "There was nothing but piles of debris and corpses. The bodies were piled on top of one another, including children, women and men. Some of them had been shot in the head, and some were beheaded. Some of them had their hands tied behind them, and some had their hands tied to their legs. Parts of some heads had flown off in different directions, and there was the body of a woman holding her child to her bosom; both of them had been killed by the same bullet. The bodies had been removed from one place to another with "Israeli" bulldozers. One woman stood over a maimed corpse screaming, "My husband! Oh Lord, who will help me now? And all of my children have been killed! My husband, they have slaughtered him! What will I do? Oh Lord, Oh Lord!"

A report submitted by a correspondent of *The Washington Post*, recorded what he saw as follows, "Entire houses had been destroyed by bulldozers, turned into piles of bodies atop more bodies as if they were so many dolls. And over the corpses, the holes which appeared in the walls of the houses indicated that they had been shot dead. On a short dead-end street we came across two girls, one of them about 11 years old and the other only a few months! They were both lying on the ground with their legs tied up, and there was a small hole in each one's head. A few steps away from them, on the wall of a house bearing the numbers 422 and 424, they had fired

on eight men. Every street, no matter how small, had its story to tell. On one street there were sixteen corpses piled on top of each other in peculiar positions, and nearby there lay a 40-year-old woman with a bullet between her breasts. Near a small shop an elderly man about 70 years old had fallen, with his hand still extended in a gesture as if to plead for mercy. His dust-covered head looked toward a woman now beneath the rubble."

Husayn Ra`d, 46, states, "The terrorists beheaded people with cleavers, and while they were at it they hurled curses and insults at their victims. They were slaughtering women and children right and left." And he adds, "The residents started running away in the direction of the multinational forces. But they did not protect them, especially in the Hamra area."

Mahmoud Hashim, a 15-year old witness of the massacre relates, "It was a Friday night and I was sleeping with some friends of mine in the camp. At about 11:00 we heard gunfire, but we did not think anything of it. So we slept till the next morning, but we woke up to find nothing in the camp but dogs and cats. We went out to see what was going on, and when we came near the Galilee School, we found a pile of corpses.

The fruit vendor where my family lives after his house in the Sabra and Shatila camp was destroyed by "Israeli" shelling at the beginning of the invasion. It was there that I first heard about the massacre." Then he continued to say, "I met up with a British journalist who asked me to go with him to the camp entrance on Saturday morning, 17 September 1982 so that he could record the events of the massacre with his camera. I agreed to go with him. When we got to the western end of the camp, we were surprised to find a pile of

corpses near the al-Doukhi shop. The shop owner had been beaten on the head with an ax, and beside him there was a young man. All the rest were elderly people. We kept on going until we reached the Haraj crossroads, where the journalist saw nine corpses under a truck. Some of them had their hands tied, and bullets had penetrated the surface of a nearby wall. The scene indicated that they had been subjected to a mass execution. About ten meters from this appalling sight, we found an elderly woman holding a Lebanese identity card. It appeared that she had been trying to convince her killers that she was Lebanese and not Palestinian. And twenty meters further on, we found a number of horses that had been killed, among them the corpse of a man with his head cut off. It turned out later to be my uncle, Abdul Hadi Hashim, 49. After we had gone a little farther we came upon six cadavers that had been tied together with chains. The heads of two of them looked as though they had been hollowed out, as if they had been beaten with axes. We were so at a loss and overcome with horror, we decided to go back the way we had come. By this time the British journalist had taken scores of photos of these scenes. Meanwhile we heard a sound nearby. The journalist became distraught and hurried to get us out of the camp on the motorcycle we had come in on. As we were leaving sprays of bullets were fired at us, which made him drive faster."

Recalling memories from inside the camp, the eyewitness goes on saying, "We saw cadavers piled up in a corner to our right, only fifty yards from the entrance to the Shatila camp. There were more than twelve bodies of young men whose feet and hands had been tied around each other, and they were still in the throes of death. Every one of them had received a bullet near his temple that had gone through his brain. On the right

side of the necks of some of them there were bright red and black scars. I saw a little girl no more than three years old who had been thrown into the road like a doll someone had thrown away. Her white dress was spattered with mud, blood and dirt, and a bullet had blown away the back of her head.

"When the armed men stormed the camp, families had gone to sleep and were in their bedrooms. I saw bodies lying on the floors or piled under chairs. And it appeared that many women had been raped, since their clothes were found strewn on the ground. I saw a mother holding her little boy, both of them with bullets through their heads, naked women whose hands had been bound behind their backs, a baby with a shattered head and floating ..., and they lined them up carefully in a circle, placing the head in the middle. At Sabra and Shatila the prevailing impression is that the killers deliberately aimed to kill children in particular."

After the terrorists had withdrawn, survivors wandered frantically about in search of relatives whose bodies were now somewhere among the piles of cadavers or buried beneath the rubble. Of course, they were still living the nightmare of the massacre they had just been through.

3,297 men, women and children (out of a total of 20,000 residents in the camps at the beginning of the massacre) were killed within forty hours, between September 16-18, 1982. Among the dead bodies, 136 Lebanese were found; 1,800 victims were killed in the streets and alleys of the camp, while 1,097 were killed in the Gaza Hospital and 400 others in the Akka Hospital.

Commenting on the massacre in the "Israeli" Knesset, Menachem Begin described the Palestinian resistance fighters as "animals that walk on two legs". And after the

announcement of the news of the massacre, an officer of the Lebanese Maronite Kata'ib forces maintained, "The swords and rifles of the Christians will stalk the Palestinians wherever they go. And ultimately, we will do away with them."

Another Kata'ibi officer told an American journalist, "We have waited long years to be able to storm the camps of West Beirut. The "Israelis" chose us because we were better than they are at this sort of 'house to house' operation." And when the journalist asked him if they had taken prisoners, he replied, "These operations are not the kind in which prisoners are taken."

Radio London reported via one of its correspondents that while the killings were going on, "Israeli" soldiers surrounded the camps with tanks, shooting anything that moved.

The Massacre at Al-Aqsa Mosque (October 8, 1990)

On Monday, October 8, 1990 immediately before the noon prayer, some Jewish extremists, who belonged to a Zionist extremist organization, tried to hold a prayer service inside the mosque. About 5000 Muslims rushed to prevent them from desecrating the mosque, and clashed with the Zionists led by the terrorist Ghershoun Salmoun, leader of the "Temple Mount Trustees". Only moments after the worshippers arrival, "Israeli" soldiers stationed heavily inside the mosque precincts began firing indiscriminately on Muslim worshippers. The attack led to 21 deaths and wounded 150 others.

The Massacre at the Ibrahami Mosque (February 25, 1994)

Before worshippers had completed the dawn prayer in the Ibrahami Mosque in Al-Khalil (Hebron), a blast of hand grenades exploded and the sound of bullet' spray filled the mosque. Bullets and splinters from the grenades pierced the heads, necks and backs of the worshippers, wounding more than 350.

The crime began when a terrorist by the name of Baroukh Goldstein, and a group of Jewish settlers from the Kiryat Arba settlement, entered the mosque. Goldstein was carrying his military machine gun and hand grenades along with large amounts of ammunition. He stood behind one of the pillars in the mosque, waited until the worshippers had prostrated, and then opened machine gun fire on them. Meanwhile, others helped him load the ammunition, which included internationally banned explosive leads.

Goldstein carried out the massacre at a time when the Zionist soldiers closed the mosque doors to prevent worshippers from fleeing. They also denied entrance to those coming from outside the mosque precincts to rescue the wounded. Later, others were shot dead by the occupation soldiers outside the mosque, and at the cemetery during the funeral processions of the mosque's martyrs. The massacre led to fifty deaths, twenty-nine of which occurred inside the mosque.

The Massacre at the Tunnel (September 1996)

In September 1996, the "Israeli" government opened up a tunnel parallel to the southern wall of the Aqsa Mosque, a move which Palestinians saw as a dangerous prelude to

implement the Zionist plan to destroy the mosque by shaking its foundations. Violent clashes broke out between Palestinian demonstrators and the occupation soldiers in September 25-27, 1996. During that time approximately 62 Palestinians were shot dead and 1500 injured by the "Israeli" soldiers, who used a variety of weapons, including helicopters.

Chapter Three

Zionism,
Movement and Thought

Zionists form the opposite side of the conflict we are studying here; they are the adversaries of the Palestinians who dispute with them the right to exist in this land. Zionism is the ideology that motivated the Jews of the world to settle in Palestine, creating the whole problem and establishing the Zionist state "Israel" through the efforts of its main body, the World Zionist Organization (WZO).

Zionism, as defined by Zionists, is a political ideology that calls for the "return" of the "Jewish people" to their "homeland" to which they have "historical and religious rights". i.e. the land of Palestine. It is a movement that depends and utilizes many concepts from Judaism, but that does not necessarily make it equal to Judaism. Zionism emerged as the main response for the Jewish Question that faced the Jewish People around the world, especially in Europe. It considered that the only solution to the problem of the Jewish people is to have their own home and state, just like any nation in the world. In other words to find "a land without people for a people without land" as the Zionist rhetoric says, and this land is obviously Palestine. To achieve

their goal, the Zionists formed an international organization (World Zionist Organization WZO- est.1897) that took the burden to create this homeland and transfer the Jewish people to it. At some point, however, and for strategic and political reasons, the organization needed some alternative guise; hence, the Jewish Agency was established in 1929 as a wider body representing all Jews, not only Zionist Jews. But it was under the control of the World Zionist Organization, and both organizations were more or less the same body for most of the time. Their administration, being interconnected, makes it rather difficult to understand their individual structures.

Throughout the years, many trends emerged within Zionism, that, to some extent, reflected some trends in Judaism itself. Since Judaism and Zionism are not synonymous, not all the Jews of the world support Zionism, though most do.

Here, it is also important to note a distinctive feature of the Palestinian-Zionist conflict, namely that both parties do not just dispute over rights, but over facts as well. With such dispute over facts, there is little room for developing intelligent argumentation, because facts are verifiable empirically only. For example, for a long time, especially during the 1930s-1960s, the Zionist propaganda in the U.S. convinced most of the Americans that the Zionists have been migrating to a land without people, thus the famous slogan was "A land without people for people without land". However, United Nations sources say that there are now 3,521,130 Palestinian refugees around the world, leave alone another 1.5 million refugees not registered with the UNRWA (Palestinian sources estimate that there are 9,545,000 million Palestinians around the world in 2002). Indeed, American

Zionists insist on this "fact", although those inside Palestine admit that there was a people in this land before they came, to whom they, however, accept no moral responsibility because they left "willingly"! Likewise, the American Zionist Organization published a booklet named *"Deir Yassin: History of a Lie"* in which it ridiculously denied the well-known massacre of Deir Yassin in which the "Israeli" forces killed all the inhabitants of the village on the 9th and 10th of April 1948. In other words, a form of consistent fabrication of historical facts is practiced by this body to validate the religiously based Zionist claims.

This chapter aims at introducing Zionism in all its theoretical and practical dimensions in the most concise possible manner. It goes first to Judaism as a religion and to the Jews as a people, and then introduces the various brands of Zionism in an attempt to clarify the relationship between them. The chapter then will deal with the historical roots of Zionism, reasons behind its emergence and how did it come to existence. It then follows with the Zionist Organization itself, then we move to the Jewish groups around the World and finally sum up with the position of Islam towards the concept. As we proceed in our discussion of this ideology and its movement, we hope that you will bear with us the trouble of some lengthy and time-consuming arguments, without which, the discussion may not be sufficiently informative and clear.

This chapter is devoted to Zionism and its various bodies; it will not deal with the Zionist State, "Israel", which will be discussed in a separate chapter.

Judaism and Zionism

Judaism

Judaism is a monotheistic religion that had come to existence through a series of Prophets sent to the Sons of Israel (the sons of Prophet Jacob, (Ya`qoub), of whom the most important was Prophet Moses (Musa) to whom the Torah, which contains most of the Judaic teachings, was revealed. Basic ideas upon which the Judaic faith is based are:

The Concept of Unity of God

The concept of the "Chosen People", which means that God chose the Jews to be His closest and most beloved of all humankind, and to whom He bestowed His blessings.

The concept of the Holy Land, which means that God has devoted the most blessed of His lands, Palestine, to Prophet Abraham (Ibrahim) and his progeny, in particular to the Sons of Israel, the Jews.

The concept of the Messiah (Masih) who will come at the end to save the Jews and take them to their homeland (Palestine), from where they would establish their righteous rule over the world.

These basic concepts are mentioned here unbiasedly, but there are many differences over them between the Jews of the world. Indeed, during the Judaic age, which started with Prophet Moses (Musa) and ended with the downfall of the

Kingdom of Judah at the hands of the Babylonians (from 1250-586 B.C. if we take the longest interval), the basic beliefs and practices of Judaism were not yet clearly laid down. During the period 200 B.C.-1000 A.D., four main different groups lived together under the same label, Jews, but they differed to extents that had sometimes reached to contradiction.

These groups were in brief:

The Karaites: They appeared in Iraq during the eighth century A.D. They believed only in the Torah as a holy book, and rejected all other scripts, including the Talmud (see below for the Jewish holy scripts). The Karaites followed the literal teachings of the Torah.

The Pharisees: They represented the masses and stressed upon piety and purity. They believed in all the scripts, including the Talmud, but did not follow them literally; on the contrary they imaginatively and innovatively understood the holy scripts. They believed in life after death and the Day of Judgment, and are seen as the great grandfathers by modern day Jews. Jesus (Prophet `Isa) preached mainly among this group and he accused them of being impure and deviant.

The Sadducees: Unlike the Pharisees, this group represented the rich and educated elite. They appeared during the time of Persian rule, and most of the Rabbis and servants of the Temple used to belong to them. The Sadducees neither believed in the revival of bodies in the hereafter nor in the Day of Judgment. They also rejected the Talmud and followed the Torah literally. They conceived God as an ethnic one, who is the God of their people only, the People of Israel.

The Essenes: They believed in a form of religion and practice that is near to Christian monasticism. They led an ascetic life that did not care for property or any other affair in life that distracted them from worshipping God. This group started during the time of Jesus.

We have mentioned these different groups to establish that Judaism is not a single concept, or even a belief, that was established and practiced in a certain form at one point of time. Consequently, when we refer to Jews we do not mean that they are of one faith, but rather people with some common beliefs, but do not even share the basic concepts. Yet, they consider themselves as one for reasons that will be discussed below. Based on this, whenever we say: "Jews believe" or "Judaism says" we certainly do not refer to all groups, but mainly to most of them.

Holy Scripts

The Holy scripts of Judaism are not the same; they are composed generally of two scripts: The Old Testament (Tenach) and the Talmud.

The Old Testament is composed of 39 books of which the Torah forms the first five and the rest deal with the history of the Jews, their prophets and the Temple. They were compiled in 444 B.C. 700 years after the death of Prophet Moses (Musa).

There are two traditions that explain the Torah, that is mainly compilations of rules of religious conduct, moral teachings and rules of civil life. First is the Mishnah that refers in a general way to the full tradition of the Oral Torah, as formulated by the Rabbis in the first centuries of the Common Era, and had to be transmitted and learned by word

of mouth. The second is the Gemara, or the Talmud; both terms refer to the same thing and are derived from words that mean study and learning. The Babylonian Talmud is a commentary on the Mishnah, whose order it follows. It was composed over several generations, from the early third century to about the sixth. As a commentary, it deals with many aspects of the Mishnah, often going far beyond mere explanation.

Judaism: A Religion or an Ethnicity?

The question that arises here is: if Judaism was not completely established, then on what basis do the Jews consider themselves as one, and why are they united under one category despite massive differences? Further, if Judaism is a religion why do we say the "Jewish People" in the sense of a nation? Followers of one religion should be classified in religious and sectarian bases and not as "nations" or "ethnicities".

Judaism has a distinctive nature among the Abrahamic religions, and among the major religions of the world, in its definition of believers and in setting the borders of the faith. Being a Jew is determined by two parallel factors, belief and heredity. Belief refers mainly to believing in the four common basics in their different versions. As for heredity, it is determined through motherhood, every child born to a Jewish woman is a Jew. Most of the Jews, and based on the concept of the chosen people, regard God (known in Hebrew as Jehovah) as their God and religion as an identity rather than a faith. Unlike the major religions of the world, most Jews believe in a Judaism that does not seek to expand its circle of believers through propagation, and they do not conceive any form of missionary to convert people to Judaism, apparently

because of the concept of the chosen people. One cannot "become chosen" because God had already chosen His people, and His choice favored the Sons of Israel.

This understanding is supported by the concepts of sacred and of good and bad. Although Judaism stresses the unity and might of God, in many cases we find God personified and humiliated. He speaks to man and He debates the Rabbis; indeed the Rabbis might overwhelm and defeat Him with their knowledge. Most of the concerns of God are devoted to the Jews and most of His actions are dedicated to them. He is happy when they are happy and feels sad and guilty when they are not. Jehovah leads and directs the Jews in their fight and truce, in their conquests and victories; His spirit is materialized in "His people". In short, it is a story of a people and their loyal king rather than a God and His creatures.

An analytical review of the above understanding may lead us to the conclusion that God is not the most sacred object in Judaism, He may be humiliated and even defeated. Rather, the most sacred are the Jewish People who make God happy if they feel so, and sad, or even guilty, when he causes them pain or distress. This conclusion is supported by the concept of good and evil as well: any deed that makes the Jewish people happy, or well off, is a good one from a religious point of view. Therefore, if you are born to a Jewish mother (Jew by heredity), but you deny Jehovah and call the Torah a naïve mythical book, then you will still be a good Jew if you do things that contribute to the well-being of the Jewish People. Therefore the question of apostasy is not very much of a question in contemporary "Israel", even for communist and atheist "Jews". This understanding explains much of the political behavior in contemporary "Israel". It explains the

rationale of a fundamentalist religious party forming a coalition government with a leftist socialist party, and that of a socialist party in accepting a religious party to take over important ministries like the ministry of education.

The basic mission of the Jews in life is neither to promote their faith nor to save the world, it is not to establish justice in the world and not to promote truth as many religions advocate, but rather to "maintain the existence of the Jewish people". The source of such a notion might be found in the historical context, especially that Jews have always struggled to exist, in Egypt, and in Palestine where they ruled a hostile population, and in Babylon and Assyria where they lived after the destruction of their kingdoms. Until all the Jewish scripts were completed, the situation has always been as such.

All the above reasons contribute to the great complexity and controversy in the definition of Judaism, is it a religion or an ethnicity? The answer seems to be that Judaism is a religion that does not have clear and accepted-to-all bases. Yet, being a Jew is very much dependant on heredity that could not be maintained through reaching a common understanding on the components of the faith, but rather through stressing the loyalty to the group; the only and most common characteristic among Jews is that they are born as such. To sum up, it is possible to say that Judaism is a faith that defines its loyalty in a way much similar to that of an ethnic group, but in religious terms. Thus, if you contribute to the well-being of the ethnic group, you are not a patriot but rather a saint.

This, however, does not make Jews an ethnic group because, until the emergence of Zionism that was based on this postulate. Jews in the whole world did not share common

elements that qualify them to be an ethnic group, such as language, common history, common fate, genetic similarity or common culture, except for some parts concerning Judaism that are not established over common bases as we have seen. Above all, at least for the last 1900 years, they did not have the territory on which people interact and form social norms, institutions and culture. Judaism left its followers in a unique case of loyalty: to be culturally a part of the civilization of the place where you live in, yet born with a different identity as a Jew, who partially shares some vague concepts with people around the world who were born with the same identity. While a Jew is very much a part of the place where he lives, at least culturally, he is totally detached from it in loyalty because he was born with a different identity that does not give him much more than a label and the status of being a member of a minority group. It was neither possible to be completely a member of society nor a member of another ethnic group in the real sense of the word.

Contemporary Jewish Groups

The above background may help us to introduce the Jewish groups that exist today, and to understand the logic of their classification.

First, Ethnic Jews: who are Jews by definition. They were born as such, but they lost all their ties with Judaism as a religion. They believe that Judaism is an ethnicity and a cultural heritage rather than a faith. It is estimated that more than 50% of the Jews in the U.S., and far more than 50% of the Jews in the former USSR, belong to this group. Therefore, Jews of this group form around half the Jews of the world; they are usually referred to as secular Jews.

Second, Jews with a form of religious belief. They are divided into:

Orthodox Jews: They inherited the form of Judaism that existed in medieval Europe. They believe in the Torah as the word of God as well as in the Talmud. They consider all the teachings and legislations that come in these scripts to be compulsory for all Jews. They follow most of the teachings, including those of the Sabbath, the kosher food (the religiously approved food) and all other Jewish rituals.

Reformist Jews: Followers of what is known as the school of Haskalah, which is a Hebrew expression for Jewish Enlightenment. It appears as a response to Orthodox Jews, and represents the essence of the Age of Enlightenment in Europe. It tries to adapt Judaism to modern civilization; it proposes the superiority of rational thinking over all other sources, including religious ones; it tries to distinguish between ethnic, cultural and religious components of the Judaic faith; it calls for keeping the religious content only, dismissing the rest to make Judaism merely a religion. Therefore, they call for disregarding the idea of the return of the Messiah and other related ideas as ethnic components of Judaism. Reformation, known as the Haskalah movement, strives to strengthen the ties between Jews and the society in which they live, in order to achieve more integration as a solution to the Jewish problem.

Conservative Jews: They represent more than one group, and believe that Judaism is "an expression of the constant spirit of the Jewish People" that developed and took different forms throughout history. Therefore, Judaism is not standardized, it undergoes changes that come out of the spirit of the Jewish people. This group conceives religion

as Jewish Folklore and nothing more. Beliefs and views of this group are very much similar to those of Zionist Jews.

Both reformist and conservative Jews do not believe that the Torah is the word of God, or that it was revealed to Prophets. Rather it is a compilation of teachings and wisdoms that prophets came up with through Godly inspiration and not revelation. Jewish rituals are not compulsory for them, they accept female Rabbis, homosexual marriage, and they see that religion is open to change because it is a human product, though they favor following some teachings like Sabbath and kosher food, occasionally as Folklore.

On the other hand, Orthodox Jews believe in Judaism as a religion, and in its holy texts and teachings that should be followed literally. Although Orthodox Jews control the religious institution in "Israeli" society, they form only 5% of the Jews of the world.

Zionism

In the late nineteenth century, the Jewish Question became, for many reasons, a persistent problem in Europe, particularly after the emergence of nationalism in the continent, Zionism presented itself as the solution for the Jewish problem by calling for the establishment of a homeland for the Jews of the world.

Although Zionism may be traced to the eighteenth century, it never became an important option until the end of the nineteenth century. Zionism was first proposed by Jewish writers around Europe as the solution for the Jewish problem, but was not introduced in a comprehensive and systematic manner until Theodore Hertzl, a Jewish journalist from

Austria, took the initiative and organized the First World Zionist Congress in Basel, Switzerland in 29-31 August 1897 A.D. The conference declared the establishment of the World Zionist Organization (WZO) that aimed to "create for the Jewish people a home in Palestine secured by public law". By public law they meant international recognition. The WZO gradually grew larger and stronger, and it achieved its main goal by the establishment of the Zionist State "Israel" on Palestinian lands. Before this, few Jewish writers called for establishing a homeland for the Jews in Palestine. Amongst them were Rabbi Zvi H. Kalischer who wrote in German "Looking for Zion", and Moses Hess who, under the influence of the Italian national struggle, wrote his book *"Rome and Jerusalem: the Last National Question"*. But, the most important and most pragmatic call for Zionism before Hertzl was that of the Jewish Polish thinker Leon Pinsker, who established a movement called "Hibbat Zion" (the Lovers of Zion). It started working for its goal of a Jewish home in Palestine through direct, but unsystematic, settlement in Palestine. It bought lands there and raised a special fund to finance its activities. It penetrated into Palestine through the good offices of some corrupt Ottoman officials, notwithstanding the formal stand of Sultan Adbdulhameed II against any Jewish plans to settle in Palestine, and the restrictions he placed on Jewish migration there.

Development of the Zionist Project

Since the project to settle the Jewish People in a Jewish home was entertained, many destinations, other than Palestine, were proposed for its implementation. After his failure to achieve this goal through a negotiated deal with the Ottoman Caliph, Abdulhameed II, Hertzl, the President of the newly

established World Zionist Organization, concluded that as long as the Ottomans control Palestine it will be closed in the face of Zionist activities. As a step towards Palestine, Hertzl had thus proposed settling the Jews in Cyprus until the political set up would change in Palestine, but he soon withdrew this project due to the strong opposition of Hebbat Zion who opposed it strongly. He then suggested northwest Sinai, around the Egyptian territory of Al-Arish, but the British government, then in full control of Egypt, refused, and, instead proposed Eastern Africa, particularly Uganda. Hertzl took the project, which he considered a step in the right direction, to the Sixth Zionist Congress of 1903 that approved it with a slight majority, and recommended sending a special fact-finding committee on the suitability of Uganda for the Zionist project. Hertzl died a year later (July 1904), and the committee submitted a report that excluded Uganda as a possible destination for Jewish settlement. Other projects to settle in Libya, Argentina and eastern Saudi Arabia were proposed, but were all turned down. Finally, the WZO declared in the Seventh Zionist Congress of 1905 that Zionists should not get involved in any project to settle the Jewish People outside Palestine, on which they subsequently focused.

Schools of Zionism

Throughout the history of Zionism, many interpretations developed on the movement that were reflected in the emergence of different schools of thought, inside and outside the World Zionist Organization (WZO). These schools are mainly:

1- Political Zionism

It was founded by Theodore Hertzl himself, and, as its name indicates, it aimed to gain international support for the Zionist cause, and its project. Hertzl and his school believed that their project was so ambitious that it needed to be patronized and facilitated by one of the world's major colonial powers of that time. They therefore concentrated in quest of international recognition, or a "charter" as they named it. Political Zionists believed that the funds of the "Jewish Colonial Trust", of WZO, should be utilized solely for political maneuvers that would help in achieving their goals. Political Zionists hoped to persuade the Ottoman Empire to accept their project through an offer to pay part of the Ottoman debt in return. The way to Palestine was at that time seen to be only possible through the Ottomans who had been in control of the territory for the last four centuries. This approach had, however, failed because of the categorical rejection of Sultan Abdulhameed II to all such plans. Alternatively, the political Zionists looked for the support of Germany, a close ally of the Ottomans, to persuade them to do so, as had been reflected in the frequent meetings that Hertzl had with Prussian officials, and with the Emperor himself, until the beginning of WWI. By then, a strong trend emerged within the Zionist body to seriously seek British support for their cause.

The Political Zionists had initially controlled the WZO, but they soon faced strong opposition from the pragmatic Zionists who strove to launch the project immediately through direct colonization.

Today, we may argue that political Zionism no more exists in the above form, though the Revisionist Zionists may be

considered as its heirs, or at least those who consider themselves to be so.

2- Revisionist Zionism

Revisionist Zionism is an extremist movement founded in 1925 by Vladimir Jabotinsky, a Polish Jew. He called for the direct establishment of a Jewish home on both sides of the Jordan River, including today's Jordan, through direct, extensive and armed colonial activities. He rejected all British plans as they too slow to achieve the Zionist goals. His ideas were, however, not popular among the various Zionist schools. At certain times he broke up with them and established a new Zionist organization that he called the New Zionist Organization (NZO). Revisionist Zionism is mainly a liberal national movement represented in today's "Israeli" politics by the Likud Party, and its two main rival leaders are Ariel Sharon and Benjamin Netanyaho. Amongst its former leaders was Premier Menachim Begin (1977-1983) and the four-time premier Yitzhak Shamir (latest was 1990-1992). The military arms of this school were the terrorists Irgun and Stern Organizations, that had both participated in the 1948 war and were responsible for many massacres, most notorious of which was Deir Yassin.

3- Labor Socialist Zionism

Socialist Zionism believes that the social composition of the Jews is unique and distinctive, thus they should refrain from being assimilated into other cultures. This school was mostly widespread among the Jews of Russia and Eastern Europe, its basic figures in the beginning were Naham Syrkin and Aharon Gordon who respectively stressed the ethical element of the Jewish culture and the role of labor and work values in creating the new home. This school had a strong

impact on the Jewish refugees inside Palestine, and a decisive role in shaping the history of "Israel". Its strength had been mainly acquired at the time of David Ben Gurion, the godfather of the Zionist State, and the champion of the immigrants in the WZO.

This school worked for the creation of a giant body of institutions that would shoulder all the responsibilities of the state before its formation, and would run its affairs once it is established. During that time, they controlled the Jerusalem office of the Jewish Agency and converted its executive committee into the first Government of "Israel" in 1948. They controlled the Jewish Colonial Trust which they converted into the "Israeli Central Bank", and established the Labor Union, Histadrot, while their military arm, the Haganah Organization, that fought in the 1948 war, was converted into the "Israeli Defense Forces", the official name of the "Israeli" army. They also had the Palmach, an elite military organization that was converted into the "Israeli" Commando force. Both military forces had played a major role in expelling the Palestinians in 1948.

This school, represented in "Israeli" politics by the Mapai, (Labor Party), controlled the Zionist State and led its goyernment until 1977 when the Likud overthrew it and revolutionized the "Israeli" polity. Basic figures of the Mapai are, Shimon Peres, Prime Minister several times and foreign Minister in Sharon's government until November 2002, Ehud Barak, a former Prime Minister, Benjamin Ben Eliezer, defense minister and Secretary General of the party until November 2002.

4- Religious Zionism

Religious Zionism, as its name indicates, emphasizes the religious nature of Zionism. It is divided into two main streams:

First: It believes that today's Zionist movement, though secular in nature, participates in achieving the religious goals of Judaism, and would eventually follow the religious teachings. This school has been on the go since the early days of Zionism, and it basically encourages the Zionists to work for their goal, but without forgetting the Torah's religious teachings. Its main founders were Yitzhak Cook and Chaim Landau, and is represented in today's politics by the Mifdal (Religious National Party) led by Chaim Shabira, Yosif Bourg and Yitzhak Rafael.

Second: It is a group that had initially considered Zionism a form of heterodoxy that opposed the divine doctrine that do not allow the Jews to return to Palestine before the coming of the Messiah. It maintained this stand until the Balfour Declaration. It interpreted its promise of a homeland as the realization of the divine promise. However, while participating in Zionist activities, they do not recognize "Israel" as a proper state, they neither accept its flag nor conscript in its army. Yet they are accommodated by the various "Israeli" political parties, although they are occasionally criticized for their negative attitudes towards the existence of "Israel". In today's "Israel", this school is represented in a way by Shas party, which is gaining increasing popularity, and its main figure had until recently been Arieh Der'iy.

5- Cultural Zionism

This school stresses the cultural unity of the "Jewish People". It believes that the main danger that faces Jews of today is the loss of identity and assimilation into other cultures. It stresses Zionism as an ethnicity, and calls for keeping and reviving "Israeli" traditions among the Jews of the world, the Diaspora. However, it is not an independent school of Zionism; but is represented through the above schools.

Generally speaking, political differences seem to be marginal inside the Zionist body in the sense that they do not imply differences in the goals or in the ways of achieving them, but are mainly on strategy and priorities. They all agree on the goal of making Palestine a home for Jews through direct colonization, but differ over whether they should do it by themselves or through gaining international support. Until today, political differences still remain marginal. Except in "Israel", it is indeed very rare for left-wing parties to form a coalition with religious parties, or give them important positions like the education ministry. We may safely conclude that the Zionists adopt political ideologies, like liberalism or socialism, as a means to achieve the Zionist agenda; the main substance remains the same.

Zionism as a Form of Discrimination

Zionism defines itself as a national movement that strives to achieve the national dreams of the Jews but the reality is much different from this claim. The word national is related to a nation, mainly people living in a locality, a specific land that gives them its name, and is very much tied to the concept of ethnicity. The Jewish people, as we have seen, are not one

ethnicity or one nation as such, but they entertain certain religious ideas that blend their ethnic and religious identities, which do not, anyhow, qualify them to form a distinctive nation. Furthermore, Zionism did not pursue a national struggle *per se* because it did not exist on a certain land striving to liberate its people; rather, it is more of a form of colonization that excluded the autochthons of the land. Even if we accept that Jews constitute one nation and Palestine is their territory, there were, and are, local Arab Palestinians living there before and after the ethnic cleansing of 1948, for whom Zionism has practically nothing. In other words, Zionism is an exclusive movement that excludes 20% of the population from its agenda, besides the refugees that it has already created. It then calls for apartheid rule that regards only the Jews to be the citizens of the nation-because it is a state of the Jewish people in their homeland, therefore, Arabs are not part of this nation.

Based on this plausible argument, many international bodies, including the U.N. General Assembly, has maintained that Zionism is a form of apartheid and discrimination that should be eradicated. However, the U.N. issued resolution 3379 of 1975 that dismissed Zionism as a form of racism and racial discrimination. This stand had, however, continued until the Madrid Peace Conference of 1991 when the General Assembly revoked this resolution on the grounds that this conference created a new political reality and was a demonstration of goodwill from both sides. The decision revoking the resolution.

The Relationship between Zionism and Judaism

Zionism utilizes and builds on many of the Judaic concepts discussed above; it calls for the return of the Jewish People to their homeland in Palestine, and justifies the right of the Jews to this land through religious arguments. i.e. the stories narrated in the Old Testament that claims Jewish ownership of the land. Thus any people who subsequently stay in it are labeled as colonizers who usurped the rights of the Jews. For the Zionists, historical arguments are not as important as religious ones to support their claims. This, however, leads many observers to the conclusion that Judaism and Zionism are indeed the same, and that no distinction between them should be tolerated. They tend to equalize a Jew with a Zionist, and many Muslims thus consider all Jews as enemies. But this view is not precise for the following reasons:

First: This view overlooks an important reality about religious-political movements. They all legitimize themselves through religious ideas, but they are never equal to the faith. We cannot, for example, say that the Muslim Brotherhood as a political movement equals Islam, the faith, and that all Muslims are members in Muslim Brotherhood. Indeed, this is a simplistic approach that disregards existing facts. The adversaries of the Palestinians, the Arabs and the Muslims are, in fact, those who have colonized Palestine, caused the sufferings of its displaced people and strive to keep them displaced in order to settle the Jews in their place This is exactly what Zionism called upon and practiced.

Second: Not everybody who works for the well-being of his fellow believers is necessarily a believer or a good one. Many secular leaders participated in religious struggles which they understood from different perspectives. For example, the

Muslim League Party of Muhammad Ali Jinah adopted secular policies to establish a Muslim state in Pakistan.

Third: Zionism is not only a Jewish movement; there are many non-Jewish Zionists, mostly Protestant Christians. Indeed, historically, non-Jewish Zionism started long before the World Zionist Organization.

Fourth: There are some anti-Zionist Jews, although they do not form a big sector of the Jews of the world. Among them is the Natouri Karta Movement that believes in waiting for the Messiah before going to the Holy Land. There are some anti-Zionist Jewish thinkers around the world like the famous Noam Chomsky and Norman Finkelstien. It is neither just for these people nor in the interest of the Palestinian struggle to disregard such dignitaries and equate them with the Zionists.

The main religious ideas of Judaism that Zionism stressed are: 'The Chosen People', which helped very much in conceptualizing Judaism as an ethnicity rather than a faith. They utilized and built on the concept of the Holy Land and the promise made for the Jews to own it. The concept of the Messiah was also present in Zionism, especially for those who considered the Messiah a metaphor and interpreted him as Zionism itself that will take the Jews back to their homeland. They also depended on the Jewish scripts in validating their rights in Palestine through the historical narration in the Old Testament, Tenach.

The Emergence of Zionism

Zionism is a relatively modern movement whose early beginnings are traced to the 17th century, but it became an important movement only since the 19th century, especially towards its end. Zionism presented itself mainly as a solution to the "Jewish Question", which is a modern phenomenon as well. To understand Zionism, we need to comprehend the Jewish question, the environment within which it emerged and the strategic considerations that facilitated its international recognition.

A. The Jewish Question

In simple terms, the Jewish Question refers to the status of the Jews of the world in their countries, and the future of the worldwide Jewish minority. In most world countries, especially in Europe, the Jews were not considered as part of the nations where they lived. European nations regarded the Jews an alien group, who do not care for their national interest or national cause. On the other hand, should we refer to the religious background discussed in the previous topic, Jews had, as well framed themselves differently from the local people, although, most of the time, they spoke the same language and practiced the same customs. This led to making the Jews second-class citizens or even less, in those countries.

The Jewish question was not a global issue as may be assumed, but a European phenomenon, particularly in Eastern

Europe, that emerged there for reasons that will be clarified throughout the discussion.

Some imposing questions with regard to the Jewish Question had thus to be asked. Since the Jews had lived for a relatively long time in Europe, why did their problem suddenly appear? Why is it that by the end of the eighteenth century their presence became unwelcomed? And if they were unwanted right from the beginning, why had the problem become so prominent, and why had not Zionism started earlier than it did?

Answers to these questions may be summarized in the following points:

1. Before the fifteenth century, most of the World's Jewry lived in the Muslim World, especially in Andalusia, and they are referred to as Eastern Jews, or Sephardim, who continued to form most of the world's Jewish population until the 16th century. By then an other Jewish group, known as the German Jews or Ashkenazim, increased dramatically in number, especially in Poland, constituting 50% of the world's Jewry by the end of the 17th century. This population explosion among the Ashkenazim, which happened long before the industrial revolution, was due to the immigration of the Khazar Jews who belong to the Khazar tribe. This clan Jews who used to live in southern Russia accepted Judaism in the 13th century, and were considered Ashkenazim. After the fall of their Kingdom, these Jews started a massive migration to Poland, which was under Russian control by then. The Ashkenazim, unlike the Sephardim, tended to live in isolation and avoided integration, thus they were unwelcome immigrants. By 1900 the World's Jewish population

reached 10.5 millions, of whom 90% were Ashkenazim, thanks to the Khazars.

2. At the same time nationalism was emerging and spreading throughout Europe, taking an aggressive shape most of the time. Russia was no exception; romantic Russian nationalism was emerging and expanding slowly. It was Slavic nationalism which did not welcome other ethnicities, and consistently and aggressively swallowed neighboring countries like Poland, that had regarded the Ashkenazim Jews an alien group and excluded them from the national boundary. In the peak of these developments, European Jews discovered that they would have no place if they did not integrate with the societies in which they lived.

3. The above developments led to the emergence of what is known as anti-Semitism that reached its climax after the assassination of the Russian Tsar Alexander II in 1881, for which the Jews were unconvincingly blamed. Nonetheless, a massive anti-Jewish campaign spread, popularly known as anti-Semitism because the Jews descended from the Semitic race, and which reflected the national trend that laid much emphasis on the genetic purity of the nation. The campaign involved some massacres and extreme hardship that triggered a massive Jewish migration of 2,367,000 Jews predominantly to Western Europe and the U.S, during 1881-1914. However, only 28,000 of them went to Palestine, a fact that reflects how marginal Zionism was at that time, and, to some extent, how effective were the Ottoman's restriction against Jewish migration to Palestine. The anti-Semitic policies of Nazi Germany (1932-1945), before and during World War II, caused another wave of

migration, but to Palestine this time. The anti-Semitic campaign, undertaken first by Russia and then by Germany, had thus created a bulk of homeless people who became a fertile ground for Zionism, and from whom appeared its leaders.

4. Religious reformation and the emergence of Protestantism, which considered the Old Testament a main source for the Christian faith, had directly exposed more people to the Old Testament and therefore to Judaic tradition. Ideas of the Messiah, the chosen people and the Promised Land became widespread. Protestant Christians looked at the Jews as "Palestinian strangers" living in Europe, who should return to "their" country. They were unaware of the existence of a Palestinian people living then in Palestine, a notion shaped by the religious propaganda. Many Christian Protestants believe in the Millennial Reign when Jesus will come back to earth, marking the beginning of a thousand years of happiness in the world. But for him to come, "Israel" must be restored because the prophecy stated that he would come to "Israel" and descend from heaven on the Temple (which means that the Temple has to be rebuilt replacing Al-Aqsa. Indeed, abundant funds were sent by believers of this notion to "Israeli" Jewish organizations that adhered to this belief). Together with nationalism, this development persuaded most of Europe to think of the Jews as a "nation" with a land, that is Palestine. Historical sources, indeed, indicate that non-Jewish Zionism started before Jewish Zionism, and, in a way, caused it.

B. Strategic and Political Reasons

1. Zionism emerged almost concurrently with the drive of imperialism, the great powers were competing for colonies and spheres of influence in the Middle East, and the Zionists had thus formulated their strategy in close cooperation with this imperialist trend. It has to be pointed, however, that Napoleon Bonaparte was the first statesman who viewed Zionism as a strategic force for colonizing the Middle East. On 20 April 1799, during his siege of Akka (Acre), and in a desperate attempt to gain support for his campaign in Greater Syria, Napoleon issued a statement in the French official newspaper calling the world's Jewry to support the French war effort in Palestine in return for a Jewish home there. Later on, when Britain controlled this area that was crucial for the safety of its imperial communications to the East (through Suez Canal), the Zionists quickly presented their project as a part and parcel of this grand imperial project. British cooperation with the Zionists was thus motivated, *inter alia*, by this factor.

2. The fall of the Ottoman Empire, and the drive of European powers to divide its territories among themselves provided another impetus for the Zionist project. It was in the imperialist London conference of 1905-1907 that the notion of a "buffer state" in Palestine appeared, and promptly communicated to the British premier Campbell Bannerman. The idea was essentially the formation, in the eastern Mediterranean, of a pro-West alien entity that would constitute a human shield against the anti-West Muslim peoples of the region. The Jews were, no doubt, the best tool for the implementation of

this imperialist project. Thus, the underlying factor behind the formation of this "buffer state" in the heart of the Muslim World was to isolate its Asian and African wings from each other, and obstruct, or, if necessary, crush any attempt for unity between them. The hostile Zionist entity was programmed to engage the Muslims in a long and complex dispute that would drain their military and economic resources, and paralyze their political will vis-à-vis the Western superpowers. While the West guaranteed the continuity of the Zionist entity, the latter's survival has been crucial for the realization of Western imperialist aims in the region. The Christian West has apparently never forgotten its eleven centuries long conflict with the successive powerful Muslim Caliphates: Al-Rashidah, the Umayyad, the Abbasid, the Mamluke, and the Ottoman, who had all imposed their supremacy on the world. Nonetheless the progressive erosion of the Ottoman's power since the 18th century inspired European imperialist powers, particularly in the 19th and 20th centuries, to look for ways and means to prevent, by force if deemed necessary, any revivalism of the Muslim World. Hence, the notion of the "buffer state", the codename for the establishment of a Zionist entity in the land of Palestine.

3. Wide range political changes took place in Europe that became dominated by secular national ideologies that propagated such values as human rights, freedom of speech, of belief, and universal suffrage. These developments, accompanied with the process of Jewish emancipation, enhanced the position of the Jews and allowed them more space to organize political activities and run organizations like the World Zionist Organization. In short, spheres of influence that had previously been

largely closed to the Jews of these countries had now become available for their activities and influence.

C. Changes inside the Jewish Groups

This topic had been discussed in the previous part on Zionism and Judaism. Suffice to record here that most of the modern trends in Judaism appeared among the Ashkenazim, who formed the major subject of the Jewish Question. Two main trends, with totally different approaches, tried to deal with this question. The first was the Reformatory trend, known as the Haskalah, that was a form of enlightenment among the Jews. It called for making rational thinking superior to all considerations, including religious dogmas. All the Jewish texts should be judged in the light of rationalism that should dominate Jewish life. It called for purifying the Jewish faith from its ethnic and cultural content, and to take it as a faith, not an ethnicity or a blend of both. Based on the above, the Haskalah movement called the Jews to integrate with the societies in which they lived and be loyal to their nations, not to Judaism. They should simultaneously adopt the culture of their societies and keep the Judaic faith, as this had become possible in the new relaxed political environment of Europe that allowed freedom of belief. The Haskalah achieved some success, especially by taking the Jews out of their isolation, in their ghettos, to the larger society, a movement that had later on significantly contributed to increasing the Jewish influence, and thus eventually served the Zionist cause rather than the enlightenment. This success continued until 1880 when anti-Semitism strongly emerged, especially after the Jews were accused of assassinating the Russian Tsar in 1881. Millions of Jews became homeless and thus provided a fertile ground for the opposite force, Zionism.

The other important movement that presented itself as a solution for the Jewish Question was Zionism. It viewed the Jews as a nation without land, and capitalized on the Jewish concept of the Promised Land, Palestine, the would-be home for this "homeless nation". In total contrast with the Haskalah, Zionism found an audience who are concerned about the displaced and frustrated Jews of Poland, and, later on, Germany.

World Zionist Organization

The World Zionist Organization (WZO) is the international body that represented the Zionists, and shouldered the task of achieving their goals. The organization was founded by Theodore Hertzl, an Austrian Jewish journalist, who organized the Foundation Congress, the First Zionist Congress, in Basle, Switzerland in 1897, that declared the establishment of WZO. WZO was not the first Zionist body, but it was the most sophisticated, well-organized and most capable one that had succeeded, by the end of the day, to unite all the Zionist efforts under its flagship. Hibbat Zion (Lovers of Zion) was established before WZO, and pioneered the settlement activity in Palestine, but it was unable to become a pan-Jewish movement. Hertzl had indeed done nothing more than capitalize on the efforts and ideas of this body, though in a much more organized manner. Soon after the establishment of the WZO, all the denominations of Hibbat Zion became members in the new larger organization.

WZO opened its doors to individuals and institutions; every Jewish individual who paid the Shekel (the name they gave for their membership fee) was eligible for membership, and of the right to be represented in the Zionist Congress. Every 100 member was represented by one envoy to this Congress that convened annually to take all the important decisions, including electing the organization's president. Later on, with the growth of membership, the representation rules changed from one envoy for every 400 to one for every

2000, or one for every 1000 of those living inside Palestine. Currently the membership is open only to organizations and institutions, and no longer to individuals.

The Congress used to convene in centers of Jewish demographic concentration, in major cities like Basle, Hamburg, London, Vienna, Zurich, Geneva, and finally in Jerusalem. The mode of communication initially was German, the language of most Jewish leaders, of whom very few spoke Hebrew, then an almost extinct language. The Congress convened every year, then every two years and finally every four years. Currently the Zionist Congress convenes only in Jerusalem once every four years, and the mode of communication is Modern Hebrew.

The first Zionist Congress, that declared the establishment of WZO, had also established the "Colonial Jewish Trust", mainly from membership fees, contributions and donations, to provide funds for Zionist colonial activities. Later, other financial bodies were established until a very complex system of interconnected large funds was established for the WZO.

The history of WZO is composed of two important phases. The first was before the establishment of the Zionist state "Israel" when it acted as a virtual government of the Jewish people worldwide. After the formation of the Zionist State, many Zionists, had, however, believed that the WZO fulfilled its mission and should be dissolved. But others maintained that while the "Israeli" government represents the Jews in Palestine, the WZO should continue to play the role of the representative of the Jews worldwide, and as such back up the efforts of the "Israeli" government. For some of its history, WZO was tied to another entity, the Jewish Agency, which was almost synonymous to WZO for most of the time. The

most prominent figures of the WZO were Theodore Hertzl, the founder, Chaim Weizman who reconciled political Zionism with Pragmatic Zionism in a trend known as Synthetic Zionism, and David Ben Gurion, the declared founder of "Israel".

Structure of WZO

As we have seen, membership of the WZO, previously opened to individuals, is currently limited to organizations. Each organization should have at least 20,000 members to become a qualified member represented in the Zionist Congress, where seats are divided as follows: 38% for Zionist Organizations inside "Israel", mainly "Israeli" political parties; 29% for the American Zionist Organization AZO, and the rest, 33%, for Zionist organizations around the world.

The Main Administrative Bodies of the WZO

- **The Zionist Congress:** It is the supreme authority of the organization. It was established in 1897 and initially convened annually, but later once every two years and now once every four years. Its permanent headquarter is in Jerusalem (Al-Quds). The Congress had enacted the constitution of WZO, and is now the only qualified body to amend it. Members of the Congress are elected based on certain quota arrangement. Currently, every member organization chooses its representatives according to its own procedure. Until today, the Zionist Congress convened 32 times, 22 of them were in various European cities and the remaining 10, since the establishment of "Israel" in 1948, in Jerusalem (Al-Quds). During difficult times, especially during the first and second World Wars, the congress was unable to convene regularly, but important decisions were still taken by

whoever of the Zionist leaders that can be physically present. The two most important of those was the 1920 Conference of London that shifted the strategic attention of the Zionists from the Ottomans and Germany to Britain, and brought Chaim Weizman to the Presidency of the organization, and that of Biltmore in 1942, which decided to have the U.S.A. as the new major ally. The Baltimore conference had also succeeded in achieving reconciliation within the Zionist body itself, giving a strong momentum to the WZO.

- **The Zionist General Council:** It carries on all the duties of the Congress when it is not in session, including important decisions and the supervision of their implementation. The Zionist General Council convenes at least once a year and is headed by a Presidium that convenes every 4-6 weeks. The General Council played a key role in times of war, and was the body that organized the Zionist Conferences.

- **The Zionist Executive Committee:** It represented the Congress and the General Council, and formed the executive authority of the WZO. Before the establishment of "Israel", this body started for the government of the Jewish people around the world, and its members constituted the 1948 first "Israeli" cabinet. The Executive Committee was composed of 5 members during the time of Hertzl, but progressively increased to 7, 15, 19, 26, and was finally standardized to 14 members in 1968.

Besides those bodies, the WZO elects a president, who used to be very influential during the early years of the WZO but his powers gradually eroded. Indeed, due to internal conflicts between the competing member organizations, no president was elected since 1968; and his duties are carried out by the Chief Executive of the Jewish Agency. The

organization has a judicial body that decides on conflicts between its members and bodies as dictated by the constitution.

Funding Bodies of the WZO

Since its establishment, WZO has seriously sought having a strong economic base that would help it substantially in concretizing the Zionist dream. This base includes the following bodies:

- **The Jewish Colonial Trust:** It was the first and main fund established by the WZO in 1897 together with WZO, and its revenue, mainly derived from membership fees and contributions, reached at that time to a capital of 2,000,000 British pounds. Subsequently it was converted into a corporation that sold its shares to interested Jews. A branch of the corporation was established in Palestine, under the name of "Anglo-Palestinian Bank". At the beginning, Hertzl and his political Zionists viewed the fund as a tool of economic influence to secure international recognition, especially by paying the debts of the ailing Ottoman government. After the establishment of "Israel", the trust has, however, been turned into the "Central Bank of Israel".

- **The Jewish National Fund:** It was established by the WZO in 1901 to provide the necessary money for buying lands in Palestine. Its main source is charity donated by Zionists and Jews around the world. Lands purchased by this Fund are given the status of "public Jewish Property", i.e. owned by the Jewish people around the world. These lands are registered under the name of the Fund to be utilized by the Jews, but never sold or forsaken. After the establishment of "Israel", all the confiscated Arab properties were registered

under this fund, and the allocation of land became a responsibility of the "Israeli" government, who, in turn, allocated 90% of the land to Jews and Jewish interests. Most of the lands owned by the Fund are confiscated lands. Since its establishment in 1901, and until the establishment of "Israel" in 1948, the Fund managed to buy 936 km^2 only, about 3.46% of the land of Palestine, that were, however, bought from rich Lebanese and Syrian landlords and very few Palestinian families; Zionists never succeeded in peaceful acquisition of lands owned by Palestinians, all that they got from them was attained through the ethnic cleansing operations that took place in the 1948 war.

- **Palestine Foundation Fund:** It is the most important and efficient funding body of the WZO. It was established in London in 1920 to provide funds for the activities and operations for concretizing promise of the Balfour Declaration to establish a Jewish Home in Palestine, and for the construction of cities and settlements to absorb the incoming Jewish immigration. This fund played an important role in establishing Jewish institutions and workshops in the fields of industry, agriculture, culture, and social welfare, as well as facilitating migration. The Foundation Fund paid all the costs of transferring the Jews of Germany after World War II, it provided most of the costs of the 1948 war, and funded the immigration of Jews from the Arab countries, Ethiopia, Russia, and the rest of the world, to "Israel". The Foundation Fund operates in 47 countries around the world, besides its branches in "Israel" and in the. U.S., known as "The United Call of Israel", that actively cooperates with other American Jewish funds there such as the "United Jewish Call".

Trends inside WZO

Basically, the Zionist schools, discussed in the section on Zionism and Judaism form the main trends inside the WZO, with the same names and titles we recorded there: The labor or Mapai, the Revisionists or Hirot, now known as Likud, and the Religious school known as the Mizrahi. Besides these three important trends, there are the Confederation of United Zionists which tries to maintain the same policy line of Hertzl. It appeared as a response to the above political trends inside Zionism, and believes that Zionists should stand united, thus they do not recognize the above political organizations inside the Zionist body, and held itself as the main trend inside the WZO. Its funding bodies include the "Development Projects Fund", established in 1946, and the Women Zionist Organization of America, known as Hadassa. After the establishment of "Israel" they supported the policy of interfering in "Israeli" affairs because "Israel" is the legitimate child of the Organization.

Brief History of WZO

In the early years after its establishment, the main task of WZO was to establish itself as a pan-Jewish organization and consolidate as much support as possible. It complimented the efforts of the Zionist pioneers, in an efficient manner. During its first years, the organization was headed by political Zionists who aimed above all to rally international support to any of its proposed settlement projects that included Cyprus, Libya, northeastern Sinai, eastern Saudi Arabia and Uganda. Aside from Palestine, the project of Uganda was the most serious project, endorsed under the influence of Hertzl who, after getting this offer from the British government, saw that as better than nothing and Zionists should accept it in the

circumstance as a first step. Hertzl, however, died a year later, in 1904, and the project was ruled out, after a special committee reported the unsuitability of Uganda for a Jewish settlement.

After Hertzl, Political Zionism became less influential, and the Zionists strove to achieve their dream through active settlement in Palestine. This trend, known as Pragmatic Zionism, established the Jewish National Fund and dedicated all the efforts to settling in Palestine only. Its power and prestige increased within the Zionist Congress and, consequently, Jewish settlement in Palestine accelerated Meanwhile, "Synthetic Zionism", that was proposed by Chaim Weizman to reconcile Pragmatic Zionism with Political Zionism, emerged and became increasingly popular. It advocated that neither international recognition, nor the settlement activity should be the sole mean for achieving the Zionist dream; rather, Zionists need to realize that by intensifying settlement it would attract the attention of the world and make concrete steps that will help them in securing international recognition; both lines should work synchronically. Synthetic Zionism had thus become the most prominent trend within WZO, and dominated it until the establishment of "Israel" in 1948.

When World War I erupted, the WZO was caught in a very critical situation, as it was in essence a pan-Jewish organization that had many denominations spread across Europe. Its headquarters was in Berlin, while an important portion of its activity was conducted by its branch in London. Before World War I, many Zionists looked at Germany as their main ally because they saw it as the only power that could influence the Ottomans, and convince them of

establishing a Jewish Home in Palestine. At the same time, a minority of British Zionists, led by Chaim Weizman, maintained that it was in the interest of their project strategically to ally Britain, and they tried to persuade the WZO to this portion. The war deepened the gulf between these two conflicting parties, but the Balfour Declaration was a decisive development in favor of the pro-British Zionists. Soon after the war, the headquarters of the WZO was moved to Britain and Chaim Weizman was elected for the presidency.

The Balfour Declaration stipulated that the British government would like to deal with a body that represented all Jews, which it called "The Jewish Agency". To shape their organization up to British demands, the Zionists established this Agency, and included non-Zionist Jews in it. However, the WZO controlled the Agency, and the executive committee and the president of both bodies were the same people. Once the need for the Agency ended, both bodies became synonyms.

Britain gave full support to the project. However, under the pressure of the Palestinian Revolution of 1936-39, Britain issued the White Paper of 1939 that limited Jewish immigration and acquisition of land, and promised the Arabs to establish a Palestinian State after 10 years. The Zionists opposed this line of policy politically, and sometimes militarily. But they felt it wise to postpone their confrontation with Britain and fought beside it during WWII.

Again the War left the WZO in a difficult condition; however, its leadership met in Biltmore, U.S., and decided to shift their focus to the U.S. who, soon after the war, asserted political pressure on Britain to revoke the White Book of

1939 and so was the case. The U.S. gave the Zionists huge financial aid and put enormous political pressure on member states of the U.N. to pass Resolution 181 that gave Jews the right of a state in Palestine.

The 1948 war erupted and a Zionist State was established and named "Israel". This was the most decisive event in the history of Zionism, and for many Zionists, WZO was no more needed.

Zionists were divided between two views. The first, led by the Zionists of Palestine under the Prime Minister of the new state, David Ben Gurion who maintained that the main task of WZO was to create a Zionist State and once this took place it should replace the WZO in representing the interests of all the Jews around the world. They believed that the ultimate goal of all sincere Zionists should be migration to the newly-born "Israel", and that a new body was then needed to facilitate this migration of all Jews, even those of the U.S. and the West. They looked down upon their opponents, and did not see in them true Zionists.

The Second opinion was championed by the above-mentioned Confederation of United Zionists, who argued that "Israel" was the legitimate child of WZO, and should thus remain subordinate to its authority. They did not see the establishment of "Israel" as the end of the way, and considered WZO to have a much more important task to do, namely to preserve the Jewish identity of Jews around the world, and prevent their integration with their local societies, that threatened the existence of the "Jewish Nation". Jews of the world still needed a body to represent them, which should not, anyhow, be a regional government like "Israel", but an international organization like the WZO. Indeed, "Israel", in

their view, could not sustain itself without the support of the Jews of the world, whose existence around the world, especially in the West, was vital to the survival of "Israel" in that ocean of Arab and Muslim animosity around it.

Further, they did not regard the Jews of the Free World to be in the Diaspora and thus need not to migrate to "Israel". Because they are not subjected to discrimination and oppression, Jews of the Free World are thus free to voluntarily migrate to the land they like. This, coupled with many other considerations, is, indeed, contrary to the Zionist legend of the eternal Jewish affection to the Promised Land. If this argument holds water, then why do not the Jews of the West, who form more than half of the Jewish population of the world, migrate to "Israel"? Why is it that most Jews who migrated to "Israel" were compelled to do so, because of some political and economic conditions in the countries in which they lived (such as Poland, Germany after the war, Ethiopia and the USSR after the fall of communism)? They, in fact, had no other choice except to migrate. Indeed, of the 2,367,000 Jews who migrated from Russia after the 1880s Russian anti-Semitic campaign, only 28,000 (1.18% only) went to Palestine and the rest headed to the U.S. and Western Europe.

In conclusion, the Zionists of Palestine, under Ben Gurion, emerged winners from this conflict; while not dissolving the WZO, they moved its headquarters to Jerusalem and made it subject to "Israeli" law. WZO had been by then merely an "Israeli" tool that was mainly concerned with providing it with political support, especially through influencing the decision makers of countries where Jews lived, and by supporting "Israel" financially and technically to accommodate new immigrants.

Jews of the World

For most of their history, Jews did not live in one place except for a short while during their early Kingdoms in Palestine. Ancient Jews, who formed and ruled the ancient Jewish Kingdoms, were composed of 12 tribes attributed to the 12 sons of Prophet Jacob (Ya`qoub or Israel). However, after the destruction of these Kingdoms by the Assyrians and the Babylonians, most Jews were transferred to current areas of Iraq and Iran, where they lived until the emergence of the Persian Empire whose Emperor, Cyrus II, allowed them to go back to Palestine. However, having lived there for generations, most Jews did not opt to go back to Palestine. According to most historical sources, since the destruction of their kingdoms, the Jews who settled around Jerusalem never exceeded one third of the Jews of the world.

Jews of Jerusalem managed to establish a form of autonomy under the Maccabean family, and later, under Herod, they rebuilt the Temple. After being subjected to Roman rule, they revolted several times, the most important of which was in 135 C.E. that resulted in vanquishing the Jewish existence in Palestine at the hands of the Romans. The one third who lived in Palestine was forced to join the rest of the world's Jewry in their dispersion. Since then, Jewish existence in Palestine was minor and did not have a political shape, until the late 19th century, when the emergence of Zionism subsequently changed the picture.

This life outside the "Promised" Land for 1900 years is known in the Jewish tradition as Diaspora. Of course this view supposes that Jews are a people or ethnicity, a hypothesis that is discussed in details in the Chapter on Zionism and Judaism. During these 1900 years, Jews spread around the world in search for shelter and subsistence. The nomadic tribal background before their Kingdoms must be emphasized here.

The Diaspora

In the Jewish understanding, Diaspora refers to "the forced exile of the Jews out of their Promised Land", to which they always had emotional and spiritual ties. To them, this Diaspora was a divine fate because of what their ancestors committed in the Holy Land, and it would end only when God sends the Messiah to lead them back to the Holy Land and establish their rule there. Therefore, Jews shall not seek rule over Palestine before the coming of the Messiah, hence, Zionism was viewed as a form of heterodoxy when it first emerged.

However, a careful historical examination proves that this Diaspora was voluntary rather than forced for most of the time, and that the Jewish spiritual and emotional attachment to Palestine is rather a myth. When the Jews of Babylon and Assyria were allowed to return to Palestine, few of them returned, and the number of Jews in Palestine did not exceed one third of the Jews of the world. Today, Jews of Western Europe and the U.S. who form more than half of the Jews of the world, do not entertain going to "Israel" or classify themselves as Jews of the Diaspora, for the term Diaspora is conceived to include only those under political or economic pressures, like the Jews of former USSR or of Ethiopia.

Despite all the efforts to resettle the Jews of the world in Palestine, only five millions Jews or 38% of the world Jewry lived in Palestine in the year 2002, according to "Israeli" official statistics.

Composition of the Jews

In the ancient times, Jews were composed of 12 tribes who supposedly formed a political union under the Kingdom of Prophets David (Dawud) and Solomon (Sulayman). However, for most of the time these tribes had actually lived in continuous conflict and they split again into the Kingdoms of Judah and Israel.

However, although Jews conceive themselves as an ethnic group who do not seek to convert others to their faith, and although they stress that they are the grandchildren of the 12 Jewish tribes, there is another tribe that is the Khazar tribe which is considered the 13th tribe in the history of the Jews. It is a Tatarian-Turkic tribe that lived in north Caucasus and north of the Caspian Sea (South Russia), along Muslim-Christian borders. To preserve their interests, especially in trade, they needed to belong to a neutral group, and this was among the main reason for their conversion into Judaism in the eighth century C.E.

Contemporary Jews, however, are divided into three major groups:

1- The Sephardim: They are mainly the Jews of Andalusia, (Spain and Portugal) who speak Ladino (Jeudezmo), a language based on Old Spanish written in Hebrew alphabets and mixed with Portuguese, Turkish and other components. Following the fall of Andalusia, they, as well as Muslims, were expelled, and most of them migrated to

North Africa, Greece, Turkey, while some remained in Andalusia where they pretended Christianity to escape persecution. The Sephardim have their own way of praying and performing religious rituals, and they eventually managed to establish a strong network of commerce and trade, thus forming a Jewish rich aristocracy that contributed to the emergence of capitalism. The Sephardim integrated with their new environment and cultures and ultimately became an active part of the Arab culture in Andalusia and then of the Western culture in Europe. Amongst their celebrities are the Dutch philosopher Spinoza and the British Prime Minister B. Disraeli.

2- Jews of the East and the Muslim World: These differ significantly from the Sephardim in their historical and cultural background, though they are mistakenly referred to as Sephardim, simply because they follow the Shephardic method of worship. The Jews of the east are divided into groups according to the localities in which they live. The main group is the Arabized Jews such as those living in Iraq and Yemen. Other groups are Kurdish Jews, Persian Jews, Indian and Chinese Jews...etc.

3- The Ashkenazim: They are mainly the Jews of Poland and Russia, who speak Yiddish, a form of Middle High German, written in Hebrew alphabet and mixed with Russian, Polish and English. Ashkenaz in Hebrew means Germany, and Ashkenazim are attributed to it. They had their own ways of prayer and performing religious rituals. They experienced a population explosion, especially during the period 1800-1930. The Ashkenazim were the most isolated Jewish group, who, wherever they went maintained their traditional costume and hairstyle. They worked as small

traders and usurers, and were generally conceived as backward groups by their societies and by the local Jews of these societies (who were generally Sephardim).

Demographic tendencies among Jewish groups around the world

Until the 15th century, most of the Jews of the world were Sephardim who lived in North Africa, Turkey, Greece and parts of Europe. However, this significantly changed after the emergence of the Jews of Poland, especially so because of the fall of Khazar Kingdome and the immigration of its Jews to Poland. Besides, the impact of the industrial revolution in Europe was tremendous on its Jews. While the population of Europe doubled from 190 millions in 1815 to 400 millions, the Jewish population of the world doubled four times from 2.5 millions in 1800 to 10 millions in the early twentieth century, until it reached 16.5 millions in 1939. Most of this increase was among the Ashkenazim whose number multiplied ten times from 1.5 millions in 1800 to 15 millions in 1939 (91% of the world's Jewry). The reasons behind this marked Jewish population Growth were their economic prosperity, strong family ties for religious reasons and they lived in areas that witnessed relative peace and did not witness devastating wars during that time.

Surprisingly, this population increase stopped abruptly just in the same way as it started. By the end of the first half of the twentieth century, not only world's Jewry stopped increasing, but also their numbers started to decrease, a phenomenon known as the "death of the Jewish People", which started with World War II that took place in areas of Jewish concentration, and continued later on for reasons that do not involve massacres or cleansing of the Jewish people. The

main reasons for this continuous decrease in the population of Jewish groups around the world may be summarized in the following:

1- The increasing level of Jewish assimilation into local societies, especially in North America.

2- Increasing conversion of Jews to other religions, especially to Christianity.

3- The increasing number of Jews' interracial marriages, especially in the U.S. where it reached over 50%.

4- The decrease in reproduction and fertility among Jews. In general, the average birth rate among Jewish groups is 16 births per 1000 population, among the lowest in the world. While fertility rate for women in "Israel" is 2.6 births per woman, it decreases to 1.6 births among Jewish women in the U.S. (Birth rate among Palestinians in West Bank is 35.8 births per 1000 population, in Gaza Strip is 42.8 and the fertility rate in Gaza is the highest in the world, 6.42 births per woman and that in West Bank is 4.9 births per woman)

The reason behind this low reproduction among Jews is generally because of urban phenomena like late marriage, weak family ties, tendency to avoid pregnancy and birth among women and increasing number of homosexuals. More than 50% of Jews in the U.S., France and South Africa live in cosmopolitan cities and the great majority lives in cities across these countries.

Since World War II, and the establishment of "Israel" in 1948, statistics show that the number of Jews around the world tends to decrease, and, in most optimistic cases, to remained stable. According to statistics by American Jewish

organizations, the number of Jews in the world was 13,837,500 in the year 1967, but it decreased to 12,988,600 in 1982 and to 12,913,800 in 1994. This shows that the number of Jews in the world decreased by 6.1% in the period 1967-1982, and in 2000 the number is estimated to be 13,254,000. However, these numbers are only estimates and differ from one Jewish Source to another, because of the difficulty of reaching all the Jewish population of the world. We may safely conclude then, that the number of the Jewish population in the world is not increasing, if not actually decreasing. Moreover, this Jewish population is concentrated mainly in three or four countries, with small other numbers spreading in the rest of the world. Indeed, Jewish population of the U.S. and "Israel" form 75% of the world's Jewish population, and 95% of the world's population live in 9 countries according to the following order: U.S., "Israel", former USSR, France, Britain, Canada, Argentina, South Africa, and Brazil.

Jewish Zionist Influence

Many followers of "conspiracy theory", especially in the Muslim World, believe that Zionist, (or Jews, as both groups are usually used indiscriminately), have established and fixed their arms everywhere, and in every institution in a way that facilitated their control of everything. Decisions everywhere are made by them, they are behind every events; they are the modern version of the gods of Greece!

It is important to note here that Zionism and Zionist efforts are essentially human that are subject to success and failure; they are subject to balance of power, norms of the universe and to forces of nature, just like any human efforts and, therefore, they do not determine the fate of the world.

To understand Zionist influence and capabilities, we need to give priority to the above reality. There are Jewish groups everywhere in the world, especially in centers of massive political influence like the U.S., who practices their life as a part of the nations in which they live occupying all positions, teachers, lawyers, politicians, physicians, judges and professors, and there are many Zionists or sympathizers among them, who do provide Zionism with the support it needs. "Israel" and its institutions are blessed with this important presence which it tries to maintain.

To take an example, let us consider the operation of one "Israeli" institution, namely the "Israeli" intelligence, the Mossad. To many people, especially "Israelis", it is considered second to none, and "Israelis" believe that it is a miracle of their creation. However, if we examine this assertion critically, it will fall apart. For when the Mossad operates in any foreign land, it will readily get the support of a local Jewish population that speaks the local language and has credible financial and political position there. They will help them in establishing ties and connections, in finding safe hides, and may provide them with financial support, tasks that will cost a fortune and years of work for any other intelligence agency in the world. Indeed, some former Mossad members indicated that the Mossad usually operates all its international operations with 24 secret agents only and the rest are mostly collaborators. Despite all that, the Mossad faced many humiliating failures such as the five-year (1974-1979) failure in hunting the Palestinian legendary fugitive Hasan Salama despite continuous attempts, its failure in assassinating the Chief of Hamas's Political Bureau, Khalid Mish'al in Jordan in 1996, and the kidnapping of one of its

high ranking agents in Switzerland in 2000 by Hizbullah of Lebanon.

Let us now move to the other side of analysis and examine an example of a country with Jewish concentration, namely the U.S. and link it to Zionist activities:

Jewish Zionist Influence in the U.S.

The number of Jews in the U.S. is estimated to be 6,061,000, 2.2% (1999 est.) of the total population, and form about 46% of the Jews of the world. Most of them migrated to the U.S. during 1882-1914 and they are mostly Ashkenazim. Despite their very small percentage, they have strong presence in the American life, and especially in decision-making. They form one of the richest minorities in the world that controls about 10-12% of the American economic activities, though, they are concentrated in two sectors, namely light industries and information. This wealth has tremendous impact on political campaigns as Jews provide about 60% of the funds of presidential campaigns.

Besides, Jewish population in the U.S. is politically active and highly organized. While voting rate among average Americans is 54%, it is around 92% among Jews, thus boosting their influence to double the real ratio. American Jews have formed influential pressure groups and lobbies, the most prominent of which are the American Israeli Public Affairs Committee (AIPAC) and American Israeli Cooperative Enterprise (AICE). AIPAC, for example, has 50,000 members who pay contributions ranging between 25-5000 dollars yearly, while AIPAC issues an influential journal called "Near East Report" and a weekly bulletin named: "Myths and Facts" about the Middle East. The latter

is distributed to Congressmen, high officials and foreign delegates visiting the U.S. and it forms an important source of information on the Middle East for most of the officials in the U.S.

Reports say that in 1980 there were 342 Jewish organizations that were allied to Zionists. They practice political pressure in every decision that concerns "Israel". They strive to cancel Arab and Muslim nations' military contracts with the U.S., and block U.S. aid to them in order to maintain a favorable balance of power in the Middle East to "Israel". During the 1980s they cancelled a 17 billion dollar military contract with Saudi Arabia, a 1.9 billion contract with Kuwait and cancelled a contract of F-16 combat aircrafts to Jordan.

In the administration of the former American President Bill Clinton, Jews controlled some important posts: State Secretary Madeline Albright, Secretary of Defense William Cohen, Treasurer Robert Robin and Director of the CIA George Tenet. Among Clinton's 11 members of the National Security Council 7 were Jews. In the legislative body there were 10 Jewish members in the Senate and 27 members in the House of Representatives in the year 2001. (There are no Muslim members in both houses although American Muslims are equal if not more than American Jews).

American Jews has concentrated their economic investment in media corporations, currently they own important portions of the shares of ABC, NBC and CBS. They own or manage the most important newspapers, like Wall Street Journal, Daily News, New York Times and Washington Post. They control the most important magazines, Times and Newsweek and Business Week.

Needless to mention Hollywood and its role in publicizing stereotypes of Arabs and Muslims, in this industry Jews own some important giants like Fox and Universal Studios.

American Jews form an important part of the American educational and academic life: among the 172 most prominent American intellectual figures 77 Jews (around 45%), among 56% of the social scientists are Jews, and 61% among top academicians in the fields of humanities.

Jews of the world and Zionism

After this discussion, it has to be noted that Jews of the world differ in their reactions to Zionism. It is rather simplistic to say that a people like the Jewish one, spread over vast geographical areas and exposed to many cultures, follows one pattern or share one worldview. World's Jews differ significantly in their reactions to Zionism:

A- Supporting Zionism: Supporting Zionism varies between:

1- **Zionist Settlers**: They believe in the "State of Israel" and its moral and spiritual significance to the Jewish people, they work for preserving its Jewish identity and participate actively through migrating to "Israel" and settling there. They form the main "Israeli" human substance, and they come mainly from Eastern Europe.

2- **Pro-Settler Zionists**: Like the cheering audience for the gladiators, this group actively supports settlement in Palestine, and provide political and financial support for the Zionist project. But they are not willing to migrate and become a part of it, mainly because they live in better conditions. They constitute most of the Jewish population outside Palestine.

3- **Utilitarian Zionism**: These take Zionism as a tool of improving living conditions, as long as it takes them out of their misery they are with it. This group believes in Zionism and defends it because it serves their interests and maintains their privileges. This kind of Zionism exists mainly among the Bureaucracy of the WZO today, some elements inside "Israel" and many of the Soviet Jewish immigrants who moved to "Israel" in the 1990s.

B- Rejecting Zionism:

1- **Anti-Zionist Jews**: Some Jews reject Zionism on religious or secular grounds. The later advocate the assimilation of Jewish populations in their local societies. Those who reject Zionism for religious reasons are either Orthodox Jews or Reformatory Jews (following the Haskalah movement). Some Orthodox Jews believe that Zionism is a secular movement that conceives Judaism as an ethnicity and not as a faith. Zionism, for them, is empty from any religious essence, it is a form of heterodoxy that claims to replace the Messiah, and contradicts the divine decree for the Jews to stay outside the Holy Land until the coming of the Messiah. The main movement representing this group is *Nateuri Karta* (The Guards of the City in Hebrew). We have to note, however, that some other Orthodox Jews believe that though secular in nature, Zionism serves the religious goals and aspirations, and they participate actively in its project.

Reformatory, or Haskalah Jews, believe that the Judaic faith should be purified from all its cultural and ethnic content and should become a religious faith only, hence Jews should become integral parts of their societies, keeping only the faith.

Secular anti-Zionist Jews believe that the Jewish Question can be addressed and solved in the context of modern Western culture through taking certain measures that ensure accommodating the Jewish population without a taking other people's land.

2- **Apathetic Jews**: They do not care for Zionism, and act as if it does not exist. They believe that Zionism is a private affair of the Jewish settlers and of homeless Jews looking for a home.

3- **Escaping Zionism**: Due to the dominance of the Zionist of over Jewish leadership today, some Jews find it difficult to oppose Zionism directly but yet they do not support it. They might overtly support it but they do that to avoid criticism and never go farther than that.

4- **Criticizing Zionism**: Some Jews accept Zionism and the Zionist State as a fact of life that cannot be rejected, but may be criticized. Critics of Zionism come from wide range groups: Orthodox Jews criticize "Israel" for being immoral and secular, secular Jews dismiss it as conservative, rigid and traditional state, liberal Jews criticize it for its highly socialist policies and for its apartheid rule, while leftist Jews see it as an ally of capitalist imperialism in the Middle East, practicing oppressive policies.

It is important to note here that many Jews support "Israel" out of their intention to change some common stereotypes about Jews in their societies: being conceived as greedy, stingy and coward vampires who care about their own interest. By promoting the "Israeli" model, they hope to present the Jews positively as hard-working, civilized and educated people who cultivate deserts and help the weak.

However, should the real face of "Israel" as a colonialist oppressive power be exhibited, they are likely to distance themselves from it, and try to find other ways to overcome these stereotypes and prejudices that "Israel" no longer serve to change, on contrary it promotes and substantiates them.

Islamic Stand towards Zionism

Many Muslims around the world, probably under the influence of the local media, or some religious leaders, believe that Muslims should fight the Jews for being Jews, and not the Zionists for what they have done. Indeed they do not see or make any distinction between the two.

Besides, due to the detailed discussions and stories about Jews and the Sons of Israel, many Muslims maintain that the Jewish characteristics mentioned in Qur'an, such as being coward, impious, dishonest and hypocrites, are inborn ones and inherited genetically. But such a racist belief is clearly wrong, and contradicts the Islamic worldview that considers all humans equal. Islam is indeed against all kinds of racial discrimination and insists on the essential goodness of man, known as "Al-Fitrah".

The Qur'anic discourse is open to all humans; it believes that the source of the unity of human kind is the unity of their creator. Differences among peoples and nations are caused by different experiences of people in this life, which should inspire them to know and learn these different experiences, and build on them for the benefit of the humankind. The only credible distinction that should be credit is based on piety that is known most by God. Muslims are given the duty to enlighten the world with this message of equality and justice, the entire world, including bitter enemies. Everybody shall thus be exposed to the real essence of the message of Islam,

even at the time of war. Converting people to Islam, willingly of course, is more important than fighting them. This is clear in the model of Saladin who liberated the land we are discussing here, but extended medical treatment to the wounded and captured Christian king and returned him to his army, by thus he wanted to send a clear message that Muslims are not bloodthirsty people and treat all as humans. But if the enemies insist on war they will find in them fierce warriors. On the liberation of Palestine, Saladin gave the Crusaders the choice, if they did not want to convert to Islam, to live peacefully under Muslim rule without seeking political dominance, or leave with full guarantee of safety.

Besides, when the Qur'an describes a people with certain shames or attributes, it does not mean that this is an eternal divine law, but simply those particular people who did what has been described in the verse are deserved to be described that way. Thus the Jews who came with Moses but were afraid of fighting the Canaanites were cowards, while the new generation that came 40 years later and fought with Joshua (Yusha), were clearly not so.

We have also to note that Qur'an also mentions stories of exemplary pious and pure people among the Sons of Israel. The Islamic worldview is not subject to changing political conditions and should not be used to claim holiness of the struggle. It is not based on feelings of hatred and revenge, indeed it should shape and direct these feelings from slipping into extremism.

It is true that a large portion of the Qur'an speaks about Jews and the Sons of Israel, but this was because their story is the story of monotheistic faith, they were the first people to have a revealed book, at least among those who exist today.

Most of the Prophets were sent to them and they interacted with divine rules to them in various ways. Their experience is a rich experience of faith and the Qur'an narrates it in detail because establishing faith is the most important part of Islam, insulting and shaming the Jews is not.

Historically, Jews lived in Muslim areas and under Muslim rule without any political conflict, indeed they became an active part of the local culture, and some of them were scientists, philosophers and politicians, mainly so in Andalusia. After the fall of Andalusia, they were subjugated, with the rest of the people, to religious oppression, and thus they escaped to North Africa and Ottoman territories seeking safety in Muslim lands. The Jewish Question and anti-Semitism is very much a product of Europe and not of the Muslims. Hence Muslims' conflict with the Jews, or a large group of them to be precise, starts since the emergence of Zionism that sought to occupy Muslim lands and expel its people. Zionism is essentially a movement that bases itself on religious arguments, but this does not qualify it to be equal to the Judaic faith.

Yet, Qur'an does warn Muslims that when Jews (and pagans) become enemies, they will be the bitterest, cruelest and the least merciful of all enemies, so that they know well whom they fight, once there is a need.

Qur'anic description and prophecy

In dealing with the Sons of Israel, Qur'an divides them in two groups: those who followed the divine teachings and stood by their messengers, they are praised and Muslims are supposed to take them as examples. The second group, which

was larger in number, was composed of those who killed the Prophets and changed the revealed teachings. (4:160-164)

The second group was dismissed as being bitter and hateful to Islam, and accused of killing their Prophets, rewriting the revealed teaching according to their wishes, believing in other gods, creating troubles and disturbances wherever they live, being dishonest and not keeping their promises or oaths, practicing and promoting usury, and of being coward and disunited.

Besides the Qur'an held the prophecy that Sons of Israel will in the future be very strong and establish themselves in the Holy Land, but soon after they will be destroyed by the Muslim's might. The first part of this prophecy had already materialized, and the realization of the second is inevitable, no matter how late will it be. Qur'an, moreover, clarifies that their might will not be of their own but they will depend on other people. This indicates a clue for the believers that their first task is to isolate this group of Jews (who turned out to be the Zionists) from its supporters, hence facilitating its destruction. The Qur'an tells us that this will be the fate of the Jews twice, but Muslim scholars differ whether this is the first or second time.

Islamic view on Zionism: The most important portion of Islam is that it does not ask Muslims to hate or fight the Jews just because of their belief, but it opposes Zionism, and sees in it a bitter adversary for two main reasons: for its racism that it places the Jews in a superior position vis-à-vis other human beings and because it strives to acquire Muslim Lands, expelling its people and establish home for the alien Jews in it. What makes this enmity even stronger is the holiness of the land which Zionism aims to control and alienate.

Chapter Four

State of "Israel"

"Israel" is a state that was established in Palestine by the Zionists, it is a Jewish state that adopts Zionism in all its institutions and laws trying to keep them consistent with the Zionist goals. The founding concept of the Jewish state is worldwide Jewish immigration that made this project possible and maintained its existence until today. This immigration is continuing for two main reasons: the Zionist belief in "Israel" as the central component of Jewish life, and the existence of poor and oppressed Jewish populations that are attracted enough by the "Israeli" appeal to take the trouble of immigration. Jewish immigration, referred to in Hebrew as (*aliyah*), which means rising, is maintained currently by promises of security and economic prosperity. But this does not sound appealing for the affluent Jews, especially in Western Europe and the U.S. who do not consider themselves in need for immigration, even for religious reasons. According to "Israeli" law, any Jew who willingly leaves his homeland to "Israel" automatically becomes an "Israeli" Citizen from the moment he gets a "New Immigrant Certificate", that may be issued even before arrival to "Israel", as was the case with Soviet Jews.

"Israel" was formed in 1948 over the lands it occupied in the 1948 war. After securing a U.N. resolution on the right of Jews in a state in Palestine (Resolution 181), and soon after Britain officially revoked its mandate over Palestine, David Ben Gurion declared the establishment of the "State of Israel". The declaration led to a war with the local Arabs and with the Arab governments, to which the "Israelis" refer as the war of independence, while the Palestinians call it the Catastrophe, that was one of the worst stories of ethnic cleansing in modern history. It resulted in killing thousands of Palestinian civilians, destroying more than 400 villages, and the exodus of 800,000 Palestinians, more than 60% of the Palestinian people, who are to this day paying the price of the "Israeli independence". This war of 1948 coupled with that of 1956 against Egypt that was attacked by France, Britain and "Israel", and the six days war of 1967 that swallowed the rest of the land that Palestinians call "home" together with Sinai and Golan Heights. This was followed by the October 1973 war, that was launched by Egypt and Syria in an attempt to break the Arabs' psychological inferiority created by the defeat of 1967, the offensives on Lebanon in 1978, the 1982 war and 1996, the First Intifada of 1987-1993, and finally reaching up to the current Intifada of Al-Aqsa that erupted in September 2000. "Israel" is thus a state founded and maintained by war, and it seeks to maintain its existence by war as its Prime Minister, Ehud Barak, once said in July 2000, when negotiating "final" settlement: "Peace with the Palestinians will be an armed Peace". One really wonders how he could still call it "peace"!

"Israel" is a state governed by law: the legislative body is the Knesset (the "Israeli" Parliament), the honorary Head of the State is the President, and the Head of the Government is

the Prime Minister who holds all the executive power. Its population in 2001 was 6,460,000, among whom 81.3% are Jews and the rest 18.7%, are non-Jewish, mainly Arabs who remained in their lands after the establishment of "Israel".

This chapter will try to briefly introduce the basic institutions of "Israel", political, military, economic and educational.

People and Demography

Based on the estimations of the "Israeli" Central Bureau of Statistics, the population of "Israel", together with the Jewish settlers in the West Bank, including Jerusalem (Al-Quds), reached 6,289,200, among whom 81.3% are Jews, 15.2% Muslims, 2.1% Christians (together 17.3% Arabs) and 1.6% Druze.

However, although the Zionist State has been there since 1948, most of its Jewish inhabitants are still immigrants who were born outside the country. Only 25.97% were born in Palestine (They are called in Hebrew *Saberah*, that means aloe), the rest, 15.73 were born in Asia, 18.23 in Africa and 40.7% in America and Europe. Until today, most of the population of "Israel" is an immigrant one; most "Israelis" hold or held another citizenship during their life and were parts of another culture.

Indeed, if we calculate the expected population of "Israel" based on natural growth rate (around 1.58%) of the population in 1948 (700,000), then the population should be around 1.5 millions only, which makes them a small minority if we consider the Palestinian population (4.7 inside Palestine, 9.5 worldwide and with natural growth rate of 3.4%, among the highest in the world). However, The Zionist state keeps sustaining itself through immigrant population from Jews around the world. Indeed, the decade which witnessed the peace process, and witnessed the fall of the Soviet Union as

well, is the decade that witnessed highest rates of Jewish immigration to "Israel": from 1989 and until 2000, around one million Jewish immigrants from the former Soviet Union flooded "Israel", most of them were granted "Israeli" citizenships before reaching "Israel". The Law of return for the year 1950 gives every Jew in the world the right to "return" to Palestine. It gives him the right to live, work, own and the right for incentives granted for new immigrants. However, there are fears today that sources of Jewish immigration are draining because Jewish population left under conditions that cause immigration is decreasing; Jews in better conditions in Western Europe and U.S. do not consider themselves Diaspora and therefore do not consider migrating to "Israel".

Internally, "Israel" is stratified according to ethnic composition of its Jews. The Ashkenazim forms the highest class, with most of the income and power concentrated in their hands and with highest levels of educations. The Sephardim are left behind and considered inferior and backward, even if they try to adjust their habits to adjust with Ashkenazim habits. Social studies found that more than 50% of the subjects from Ashkenazim did not have Sephardim friends and did not feel comfortable with the presence of a Shephardic Jew. Falasha Jews, those coming from Ethiopia are seen and treated as a third class that has the least chances, among the Jewish population, of getting high rank positions, wealth or education. Palestinian Arabs who remained in their lands after the 1948 war are considered a totally different stratum of the society. They have least chances of occupying high rank positions, least access to wealth and ownership and least care from government in providing facilities and services. A large number of the Palestinians in "Israel"

(260,000) were transferred inside "Israel" in order to deprive them from their properties that went to the state because the owner was absent.

Political and Military Institutions

Political System:

The establishment of "Israel" was declared in 1948 over 20770 km^2, i.e. 77% of the land of Palestine that was acquired through war. The new state was declared to be a Jewish State with a Jewish population of 650,000. The rest of Palestine (6239 km^2) was placed under its occupation in 1967 of which "Israel" had subsequently annexed East Jerusalem (Al-Quds) and the Golan Heights, bringing the total area of its homeland to 21,946 km^2.

The official name of "Israel" is: "State of Israel", in Hebrew it is referred to as: "Medinat Yisra'el", its claimed capital is Jerusalem (Al-Quds) and official languages are Hebrew and Arabic. "Israel" is a parliamentary democracy, but it does not have any formal written constitution due to ongoing disagreements over basic rights and definitions among the various Zionist schools. For example, Likud Party considers Jordan a part of the "Promised Land of Israel" that has been occupied by the Arabs! However, some of the functions of a constitution are covered by the Declaration of Establishment (1948), the Basic Laws of the parliament (Knesset), and the Israeli citizenship law.

The Executive authority is headed by the Prime Minister, while the President is an honorary head of the state. The Prime Minister is elected directly through popular vote, but starting from the 2003 elections he was elected by Parliament.

Elections of 6 February 2001, brought Ariel Sharon to office with a vote of 62.5% vs. Ehud Barak who lost with 37.4%. The "Israeli" Parliament (Knesset), the only legislature has wide range of legislative and monitory authorities; it is composed of 120 members who are elected for a four-year term through popular votes. Elections are held along the whole country as one constituency, then each party gets Parliament seats according to the total percentage of votes it got. This system gives more room for parties and inhibits independent participation, but it does not leave much opportunity for any party to get an absolute majority. Thus parties have to opt for coalitions in government and opposition.

Political Parties

One of the main features of the "Israeli" political system is diversity in political views and therefore in parties. Until 1977, the political system was dominated by one party, the Labor (Mapai), that was overthrown and by the Likud, who left oppositions seats for the first time since the establishment of "Israel". New parties are being formed almost yearly; sometimes the same political trend forms and dissolves more than one party in a relatively short period of time. The main political parties, Labor and Likud, have extensive institutions including social and religious ones, to which they provide state funds and facilities when in power. Another major feature of the political system is the important role played by the army in the electoral process. Members of the armed forces are allowed to vote, and retired army members are usually welcomed to join "Israeli" political parties. Indeed, most of the political figures that ruled "Israel", especially during last years, served for a long time in the armed forces.

Moshe Dayan (several times defense and foreign affairs minister), Yitzhak Rabin (Prime Minister several terms, latest 1992-1995), Binjamin Netanyahu (Prime Minister 1996-1999), Ehud Barak (Prime Minister 1999-2001) and Ariel Sharon (defense, agriculture, infrastructure and foreign affairs minister several terms, Prime Minister since 2001). In a country founded and maintained by war, public opinion seems to feel safe in the hands of the old generals.

Political parties in "Israel" are classified into three major wings: left, right, and religious, while a minor wing represents the Palestinian Arab minority composed of those who remained in their homes after 1948 war. The classification however is not based on conventional political definitions of right and left, but rather on three major criteria: party's view on the future of the Palestinian occupied lands (West Bank and Gaza Strip), the relationship between religion and state, and economic programs, the first being major criterion for classifying left and right is the first one. Political parties according to this classification are:

A- Left Wing Parties:

1- **Labor Party:** Known for a long time as the Mapai, this party was the main party in the country since its establishment. It was led first by David Ben Gurion, the founder of "Israel", Levi Eshkol, Golda Meier, while in the years 1977-1996 its leadership was confined to Yitzhak Rabin and Shimon Peres, after which Ehud Barak took over until 2001 when he lost the elections and left the office to Binyamin Ben Eliezer, defense minister in Sharon's government until November 2002, and for the February 2003 elections, Amram Mitzna' was elected to lead the party. Generally, the party adopts socialist-liberal

policies that aim at giving the Palestinians a state, but not over all the territory of the West Bank. It is willing to compromise only partly on the Jewish settlements in the Gaza Strip and the West Bank, though it maintained intensive settlement activities during its term in office. However, labor believes that Jerusalem (Al-Quds) has to remain the unified and only capital of "Israel", and it is willing to consider allowing only a very small part of the Palestinian refugees to return to their homes inside "Israel", the rest have to be settled in the territories given to Palestinians, to stay where they are or to go to other countries. The party is willing to provide perspective for such resettlement in Jordan, Lebanon, Iraq, Australia, Canada, Europe and the U.S., of course with the help of these countries. In the period 2001-2002 the Labor was a part of a national union government with the right-wing Likud. Labor is supported mainly by Ashkenazim, and holds 26 seats in the current Knesset (2002).

2- **Meretz:** This name means "vitality" in Hebrew. Meretz sets on the left of Labor Party, it is led by Yossi Sarid and is composed of a union of leftist political movements: Mapam, Rats and Shinui, that is based on a common view on the future of the occupied territories (West Bank and Gaza Strip), namely to give the Palestinian people the right of self-determination, to withdraw from all these territories, to stop settlement and dissemble most of the current settlements. However, Jerusalem (Al-Quds) has to remain the unified capital of "Israel" and strict security measures should be imposed in the Palestinian areas to guarantee the safety of "Israel". Meretz formed a coalition with the Labor party in the government that signed the Oslo Agreement; the party is

supported mainly by Ashkenazim and currently holds 10 seats in the Knesset. However, one of the groups, Shinui withdrew from this union and entered the elections of 1999 alone, and currently holds 6 seats. Total number of seats held by left wing (Labor and Meretz) in the current Knesset (2002) is 42 (35% of the total seats).

B- Right Wing Parties:

3- **Likud:** The name means "League" in Hebrew; and the party is composed of a union of right wing movements: Hirot (freedom), Liberal, Free Center, and Official List movements. It was formed in response to the Labor's (Mapai) dominance over the country and to represent right wing and religious parties. Its main founders are: Menachim Begin, the leader of Hirot, the major party in the union, and Prime Minister from 1978-1982. The first one to call for the formation of this union was Ariel Sharon, the current Prime Minister (2002) and architect of Sabra and Shatila Massacre in Lebanon (September 1982). Another main figure is Benjamin Netanyahu, Prime Minister from 1996-1999. The Likud adopts an ideology that differentiates between the "Land of Israel" and the "State of Israel"; the later being formed on parts only of the "Land of Israel" that includes the West Bank, Gaza, Jordan and some northern areas. The party believes that "Israel" has already made its concession by giving Palestinians the right to live in Jordan, which is the Palestinian state for them. Therefore, the party is not willing to allow the Palestinians to get an independent state, although they sometimes claim the contrary. To them, such a state will be "another Palestinian state-after Jordan-" and will form a threat to "Israel". They are not

willing to compromise on the Jewish settlements in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip nor to give the Palestinians any form of control over Jerusalem (Al-Quds). They propose that the Palestinians should have only a form of autonomy, and some of the Likud leaders call for transferring the Israeli Arabs to the Palestinian territories in return for transferring the Jewish settlers in Palestinian territories to "Israel" in order to create two "pure" states based on race, one exclusively Jewish and the other exclusively Arab. The Likud is currently heading a national unity government (together with Labor and some religious parties). Its supporters are a heterogeneous mixture of rich and poor, educated and uneducated, however, its main supporters are from the lower class, and less educated members of Sephardim. It holds 19 seats in the current Knesset (2002).

4- **Merkaz:** It means "Center" in Hebrew. This party has much in common with the Likud, and was in fact formed by some former Likud members who disagreed with the party's strategies. It was formed by David Levi (former minister of foreign affairs); and is supported mainly by Sephardim and it currently holds 6 seats in the Knesset (2002).

5- **Yisra'el Ba'Aliya:** Its name means in Hebrew "Israel" and immigration. The party was formed by Russian Jewish immigrants who came to the country during 1990s, and it stresses the importance of continuous immigration and settlement in the occupied territories to preserve the existence of "Israel". The party currently (2002) holds 4 seats in the Knesset.

6- **Others:** There are some small right-wing parties that do not score consistent gains in the Knesset elections, although some of them are influential especially in forming critical coalitions. These parties are mainly: Tsomet, which means crossroads in Hebrew, and led by former chief of staff in the "Israeli" army, Rafael Etan, and Hatihya or "revival", another extremist party that used to be influential for sometime, but currently marginalized. A third is Yisra'el Beiteinu or "Israel our Home" which calls for expelling Palestinians to Jordan, a fourth is Molidet or "home", an extremist party led by Rehavam Zeevi who was assassinated during the Intifada of Al-Aqsa. The latter calls for the expulsion of the Palestinians from the West Bank and Gaza, by making life for them there unbearable thus they will "choose" to leave. All these parties together hold 10 seats in the Knesset. Total number of seats held by right-wing parties in the current Knesset (2002) is 39 (32.5%).

C- Religious Parties:

7- **Mivdal:** or the national religious party. It is a continuation of the religious Zionist trend known as Mizrahi. Since its establishment, the Mivdal was an ally of the Labor party, with whom it formed several coalition governments until 1977. The party traditionally held the ministries of religious affairs and of education. Mivdal is currently an ally of the Likud, and it adopts extremist views such as the extension of the state of "Israel" to all the "Greater Land of Israel", it maintains that no part of this land should be given willingly to "foreign rule", i.e.: to Palestinians. The party is supported mainly by religious

Ashkenazim, and currently holds (2002) 5 seats in the Knesset.

8- **Yehudit Torah:** or "United Torah Judaism". This party is composed of a union of anti-Zionist and fundamentalist Jewish religious parties: Aghodat Yitsrael and Digel Hatorah, who believe that Zionism is a form of heterodoxy that challenges the divine decree that prohibits Jews from going back to Palestine before the coming of the Messiah. They do not recognize "Israel" as a state, nor its flag or national anthem, and refuse to serve in its army. But they participate in the political process to gain influence, and advocate their belief in including the teachings of the Torah in law and education, and to protect the interests of its members. Despite their views, they are accommodated as a legal political party. They do not have a problem with giving land to the Palestinians because they do not recognize it as an "Israeli" land in the first place. To them real "Israel" is waiting the Messiah to be established. This party has small, yet loyal, traditional audience; it holds 5 seats in the current Knesset (2002).

9- **Shas:** This is a religious party formed by Rabbis from the Sephardim, who objected to the control of the Ashkenazim over the religious party of Aghodat Yitsrael (above). Shas is more open to seculars, and tends to form coalitions with them. The party is becoming increasingly popular for two main reasons, first it is one of the very few bodies that speaks in the name of the Sephardim and expresses their concerns, and secondly because of its fundamentalist religious nature. Shas is increasingly growing at the expense of the Mivdal and the Likud, and currently (2002) holds 17 seats in the Knesset.

Religious parties hold a total of 27 (22.5%) seats in the current Knesset.

D- Arab Parties:

After the 1948 war, some Arabs stuck to their land to form almost 18% of the total population of "Israel" at that time, which has subsequently slightly increased notwithstanding continues Jewish immigration. Most Arabs were deprived from many rights, and until the 1966 they were placed under a special military administration. However, they have increasingly become politically active to gain their rights within the state of "Israel", and through civil means.

10- Hadash: An abbreviation for an Arabic name that means "Democratic Front for Peace and Equality". It was initially established in as the "Israeli Communist Party" which included some Arabs with communist tendencies. After 1948 the party called for equal rights for the Arabs in the new state hence is its popularity among them. It had been very popular among the Arabs during the 1970s, but is currently relatively marginal with 3 seats only in the current Knesset.

11- Democratic Arab Party: This was the first Arab independent party, that had been established by Abdul-Wahhab Darawsheh, and forms an alliance with a wing of the Islamic movement led by Abdullah Nimr Darwish under the "United Arab List". This coalition is currently the strongest Arab party with 5 seats in the current Knesset (2002).

12- Balad: Its name means in Arabic "hometown". It is led by the prominent Arab leader Azmi Bsharah and forms an

alliance with independent Palestinian candidates. It currently holds 2 seats in the Knesset.

Arab parties together hold a total of 10 (8.3%) seats in the current Knesset (2002), although they form around 18.7% of the population. There are 3 other Arab members of Knesset representing Zionist parties like Labor, Meretz and Druze minority within the Likud.[1]

Military Institution

Since the Zionist State exists amongst a huge hostile population: it has always been striving to maintain its military superiority. Although "Israel" has, relatively, small Zionist population (Arabs and non-Zionist Jews do not serve in the army), it manages to utilize a big portion of them in military activities, especially in case of war. "Israel" military strength is based mainly on the idea of a "militant society", which facilitates the utilization of wide portions of civil society in cases of war. It is maintained through semi-military youth groups, starting from the age of 15, military conscription for all adult males and females for 3 years, and reserve service that requires reservists to maintain their military fitness until the age of 49. "Israeli" military strategy concentrates mainly on three pillars: to maintain a small professional army and huge qualified reserve; qualitative training of soldiers to compensate numeric inferiority vis-à-vis the Arab neighbors, and to provide highest quality weapons and technology to enhance military superiority over them.

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[1] Other 2 seats are held by the Democratic Movement that was formed *after* elections, thus it is not included in this discussion.

The main strategic threat to "Israel" is a regional war in which all Arab neighbors may participate, namely Egypt, Jordan, Syria and Lebanon. However, the tiny geographical area of "Israel" leaves it a very small room for maneuver if a war is brought inside the "Israeli" lands, and continues for a relatively long time. Having this danger in mind, together with the risk of a small range hit and run war, "Israel" militarism is based on the following fundamentals:

1- The idea of "militant society", quality training and quality weapons.

2- Preventive wars: If a battle is on the air, "Israel" seeks to launch the first strike.

3- Deterrence: To prevent the enemy from indulging in a military combat, "Israel" maintains an arsenal of massive destruction weapons that threatens the lives of masses of civilians.

4- Maintaining Superiority: "Israel" does all it could to maintain and sustain its military superiority over all the Arab neighbors together, mainly through enhancing military cooperation with the U.S.

5- Taking the battle into enemy lands.

6- Creating buffer zones that blocks enemy hopes of penetrating into "Israeli" mainland in the first attack. (Golan Heights, Sinai and southern buffer zone in Lebanon)

7- Flexibility: This refers mainly to the ability to quickly shift and deploy forces along the various fronts of the expected battle.

8- Minimizing human losses to the least possible level through providing high tech equipments. Reserve soldiers in wartime are the main element of civil society in peacetime.

Currently, "Israeli" armaments are composed of:

A professional army of 186,500, reserve troops of 445,000 that can be delivered to battle field within 48-73 hours. In cases of national emergency, "Israel" may easily mobilize more than a million soldiers. "Israel" has 800 combat war crafts, 253 helicopters, 93 military transportation planes, 136 training war crafts, 3930 tanks, 5300 soldiers armor carriers, 1925 artillery pieces, 58 warships of different types, 3 submarines and 11 soldier carriers. Added to this huge armament are several military contracts due for delivery next year, and an estimated 200 nuclear warheads produced by "Israeli" atomic plans that "Israel" has since 1964 with the cooperation of France. Military experts assess that "Israel" has developed chemical and biological weapons, although nothing has so far been officially revealed on this danger.

"Israel" has a blooming military industry and is the fifth leading exporter of weapons in the world. Most of its military research is co-funded by the United States who paid 625 millions for the development and production of the anti-missile system, Arrow; 1.3 billions for the development of the "Israeli" military aircraft, Lavi; 200 millions for the development and production of the "Israeli" tank, Merkava; and 130 millions for the ongoing development of laser anti-missile system.

Throughout its military encounters with the Arabs, "Israel" has propagated the notion of its "invincible army", in order to convince the Arabs of the futility of military confrontation

with the "Jewish State", i.e. the idea of vanquishing "Israel" should be vanquished itself. However, it should be noted here that "Israel" won its wars mainly because of lack of organization and equipments from the Arab side, and not the opposite. The Arab and "Israeli" soldiers rarely met in a battlefield, most of the time the war ended before such a confrontation took place, mainly due to an Arab failure at the organizational level. In 1948 "Israel" faced gallant resistance some hard time from the volunteers troops, and in 1956, the Egyptian army was devastated by three organized armies, and the 1967 the surprise attack ended the war before it started. On the other hand, the 1973 war proved that when soldiers meet in a real battle field, the "Israeli" army can be defeated, in 1982 it took the "Israeli" highly organized army more than 80 days of siege to enter the city of Beirut that was defended by few thousands Palestinian militias with light arms, in July 2000 "Israel" was forced to withdraw completely from South Lebanon to avoid the continuous and painful losses it suffered from the Lebanese resistance, moreover its army faced much trouble from the Palestinians during the first and second intifadas. Currently, the "Israeli" army is trying to overcome low morale among its troops; and during the last few years, most of the causalities among the commando troops during operations of assassination or kidnapping were caused by wrong shooting by fellow soldiers. "Israeli" reports say that 4500 "Israelis" escaped from military service, let alone cases of drugs and other social illnesses.

Some critical analysts in the Arab World argue that "Israel" has never faced the type of war that can bring it to its knees, namely a continuous war that keeps high level of alerts for years. "Israel" cannot afford such a war and will not be able to mobilize its reserve for long. Thus it sought to make

all its wars fast and short. Nonetheless we shall not underestimate the striking capability of the "Israeli" army that is still theoretically capable of defeating the combined neighboring Arab armies.

Economy and Education

Economy

During its 54 years of history, "Israel" succeeded in building an advanced, stable and export-oriented economy that does not depend highly on foreign aid before. The economy is based mainly on industrial activities, information technology and tourism. "Israel" has the most developed infrastructure for information technology in the Middle East and was among the leading countries in the IT industry until the beginning of the Intifada. Throughout its development, "Israel" managed to invert the balance of trade with the U.S. for its favor, making the U.S. the first trade partner of "Israel", while "Israel" is the 20th in rank with the U.S.

In the year 2000, "Israeli" GDP was 110.2 billions U.S. dollars, GDP per capita was 18,900 U.S. dollars and economic real growth rate was 5.9%, keeping the inflation rate as low as 0.1%. The main "Israeli" success was in duplicating the GDP from 15.3 U.S. billions in 1983 up to 7 times in the year 1999 reaching 105.4 billions. Foreign aid formed 25% of the GDP in 1983 compared to less than 4 % in the year 2000, while the total sum of yearly aid remained almost unchanged. The budget for the same year was 42.4 billion U.S. dollars of expenditure and 40 billions of revenue, with a deficit of 5.7% (the budget of "Israel" is 8 billion U.S. dollars more than the combined budgets of Egypt, Syria, Jordan and Lebanon for the same year), and the public debt of

"Israel" in the year 2000 amounted to 38 billion U.S. dollars. Among other countries, "Israel" is the major recipient of U.S. aid, and in the fiscal year 2001, "Israel" received 2.04 billion U.S. dollars as *military aid* and 720 millions as economic aid and 60 millions as an aid to absorb new immigrants. The total figure is 2.82 billion U.S. dollars that is equal to 7.1% of the "Israeli" budget revenues.

"Israeli" workforce in the year 2000 was 2,435,000, 31.2% in the services sector, 20.2% in industry, 13.1% in finance, 12.8% in trade, 7.5% in construction, 2.6% in agriculture and fishing and 9.1% unemployed (Unemployment among Arab workforce in "Israel": 22%, among Jewish workforce: 7.5%). Besides, "Israel" depends highly on cheap labor force coming from the Palestinian territories (West Bank and Gaza Strip) that numbers around 120,000 workers most of whom work on bases of daily payment. One of the most important factors that helped the growth of the "Israeli" economy to grow is that it formed for itself an important market in the occupied territories that is totally under its control.

Another important factor that boosted the "Israeli" economy was the Oslo agreement and the consequential period of peace that gave "Israel" the opportunity to find its way to Arab and Muslim markets that were closed in its face for long. To overcome Arab public rejection of its products, "Israel" exports most of its products through intermediaries like Cyprus and Singapore. "Israel" exports to the Arab World through both direct and indirect ways are estimated to be 300-500 millions U.S. dollars a year.

Main products of "Israel" are electronic products and computers, chemical products, citrus fruits and diamonds.

Although the geographical region of Palestine has no single diamond mine, diamond is the first and most important "Israeli" product (25% of exports), and "Israel" is among the leading exporters of this item. Each year, "Israel" imports around 1 billion U.S. dollar worth of crude diamond, which, after cutting and processing in "Israel", is exported for 6 billion U.S. dollars. Another major export is military products; as a country found and maintained by war is expected to be one of the major producers and exporters of weapons. "Israel" produces almost all kinds of weapons: light, heavy and massive destruction weapons. It benefits in that from the technical support offered by the U.S. that helps it to be in the forefront of this field. Around 120,000 workers are engaged in military industries in "Israel". "Israel" is estimated to be the fifth leading exporter of weapons in the world, after the U.S., Russia, China and France with over 2 billion U.S. dollars worth contracts in the year 1999.

Education

Before the establishment of "Israel", Jews shared other people the stereotype that they are people who survive on peripheral economic activities, and practice profitable, but not productive, professions. The Zionists believed that this kind of professions contributed to the misery and bad image of the Jews, thus was their strife to make the next generation a productive one. They realized that Jewish home needed workers, farmers and teachers to become a reality. Consequently, education became a very important issue among the newly established Jewish community in Palestine, and educational institutions were among the first they sought to establish in their new "home".

"Israel" today has managed to become a technologically advanced society that is well on its way to post-industrialism, while its neighbors has not even managed to step into the industrial age yet. During the mid 1990s, "Israel" spent around 3% of its GDP for scientific research, almost 33% of the "Israeli" workforce is in fields related to scientific research and development, and scientists in the "Israeli" society reached a ratio of 45 scientists for each 10,000 of the population. Compulsory schooling in "Israel" is for 10 years and higher education is highly encouraged. In the year 2000 almost 37.4% of the "Israeli" population have completed 13 years or more of education. Today, there are 8 universities in "Israel":

1- Hebrew University in Jerusalem, established in 1925 various programs.

2- Bar-Ilan University, established in 1955 and currently with student population over 15,000.

3- Tel Aviv University, the largest university in "Israel", has been established in 1956 and now has over 25,000 students.

4- University of Haifa, established in 1966 and currently has over 11,000 students.

5- Ben Gurion University, was established in Negev (Al-Naqab) in 1969, has now over 9000 student and it developed one of the largest research centers in "Israel".

6- Open University of "Israel" is the latest one that currently has over 19,000 students.

7- Technion, or the "Israeli" technical institution, is the first institution of higher education to be established by the Jewish community in Palestine (in 1912), and currently has

over 10,000 students. 50% of the research done in this institution is for military purposes.

8- Weizman Institution was established in 1946 for scientific research purposes, mainly in the fields of chemistry and microbiology. It has established itself as a leading scientific institution that made many scientific breakthroughs. Currently it has 22 research units, divided among five faculties; it has over 500 experts and 750 students enrolled in its postgraduate programs.

There are currently 113,010 students enrolled in private and public higher education institutions: 1% in diploma level, 69% in bachelor level, 24% in masters level and 6% in PhD level. "Israeli" students spread across the various fields of study as follows: 29.7% in social sciences, 27.9% in humanities, 16.1% in science and mathematics, 13.2% in engineering, 8.1% in medicine, 3.8% in law and 1.3% in agriculture. Despite all these positive indicators, discrimination is still evident in opportunities for higher education. Though Arab Palestinians constitute 18.7% of the "Israeli" population, the percentage of Arab students in "Israeli" universities varies between 4.3% and 8.9% according to specialization; those Arabs who seek higher education will need to find a place outside "Israel".

Chapter Five

Palestinian Struggle against Zionist Project

After the retreat of the Ottomans from Palestine at the hands of the Arab forces, led by Sharif Hussein, and their British allies, the Palestinians, like all the Arabs of Asia were looking forward to becoming a part of an independent unified Arab state. But the British harbored a different plan and, in their quest of new colonies, they signed the Sykes-Picot agreement (1916) that divided the area among the major powers, leaving Palestine as an internationally administered area. At the same time, they made a commitment to the Zionists in Europe to facilitate the establishment of a Jewish home in Palestine, not to mention, of course, their commitment to the Arabs to form a unified independent state once they overthrew the Ottomans.

On their arrival in Palestine in 1917, the British forces were welcomed by many Palestinians as allies to the Arab forces revolting against the Ottoman state ruled by the Committee of Union and Progress who have subjected the local population to extremely inhumane conditions in the last few decades. Only a small and insignificant sector of the population resisted the British because they could not

conceive the idea of fighting the Muslim Brothers, the Ottomans.

Soon after, however, the evil intentions of the British were known, and fierce local resistance against them started in Palestine, Syria and Iraq, demanding full independence. The mission of the Palestinian resistance was, however, much more complicated and difficult as the British started to implement their commitments to the Zionists to facilitate the establishment of a Jewish home in Palestine.

Jewish immigration soon followed and all kinds of facilities were given to the new immigrants, including a green light to import weapons and establish paramilitary groups under the name of "Jewish Colonies' Police". Palestinians on the other hand were totally banned from owning or using weapons, and the death penalty was imposed on all violators of this policy. Besides, laws and procedures were enacted to facilitate the Zionist acquisition of lands, properties, businesses and educational institutions, while the local Palestinian population was deprived of such opportunities in order to enable the former to achieve the required superiority to make the place a Jewish home.

Nonetheless, Palestinian resistance continued for most of the period and all over the country in an attempt to combat the two enemies: The British colonial forces and the rich and well-equipped Jewish population.

The Uprising of the Prophet Musa Festival (Al-Quds) in 1920

This first general revolt in the modern history of Palestine took place during the festival of Prophet Musa (Moses) that the Palestinians annually celebrated in the city of Al-Quds

(Jerusalem), where they gather from all over the cities and villages of Palestine. During the 1920 feast, several Palestinian political figures delivered emotional rhetoric that touched the hearts of the large audiences. Besides, the audience coming from Al-Khalil (Hebron) was particularly provoked by a Jewish dishonor of their flag, which led to violent clashes across the city. The revolt continued for around one week, and resulted in the killing of 5 Jews, and wounding of 211. Arab causalities were 4 deaths and 24 injured, while seven British soldiers were injured.

British authorities sentenced Haj Amin Al-Husaini and Aref Al-Aref to 10 years imprisonment for their role in stimulating patriotic feelings among the public, but they managed to escape.

Yaffa Uprising in 1921

Following some pro-Zionist statements that Winston Churchill, the Secretary of State for the colonies, uttered during a visit to Palestine in 1921, the Palestinians took to the streets in serious riots that the British forces countered on 28 March, killing two Arabs and wounding several others.

On 1 May 1921, a group of communist Zionists clashed with Arab civilians in the streets of Jaffa while they were celebrating Labor Day. The Arabs responded by attacking the source of fire, a nearby Jewish house, killing 13 and wounding 24 out of the 100 people then in the residence. The clashes spread all over the country. Jewish contingents took advantage of the arms they received from the British administration under the guise of protecting Tel Aviv, and, in their British uniform, started shooting Arab civilians in the nearby city of Jaffa. In retaliation, 3,000 Arabs attacked the

Jewish settlement of Betah Tekva, but the British forces faced them with excessive fire, including its air force and heavy artillery, in an attempt to prevent them from reaching the settlement. Soon after the Arabs started massive attacks on other Jewish settlements, but were faced with the same kind of reaction by the British forces. In retaliation, Jewish settlers took 50 Arab hostages from the nearby Arab quarters, who were tortured to death. Among them were some young women who were brutally raped before being killed.

British official sources reported 47 dead and 146 injured among the Jews, while on the Arab side 48 deaths and 73 injuries, besides the 50 causalities in the abovementioned retaliation. Most of the Arab causalities were inflected by British forces.

This revolt forced the British administration to stop Jewish immigration for a short while, a step that was declared to be a sign of goodwill to calm the outraged Arab majority. In 1922 the so-called Churchill Memorandum was issued to assure the Arabs that their rights were respected and protected by the British.

Al-Buraq Revolt of 1929

This revolt was named after Al-Buraq wall, the western wall of Al-Aqsa Mosque, where Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) stationed the heavenly creature, Al-Buraq, during his journey known as *Al-Isra' wal Mi'raj*. The place is considered to be *Waqf* property (Islamic endowment property), and a holy place for Muslims, who, as a gesture of religious tolerance, allowed the Jews to hold their prayer there, as they consider it holly and call it the Wailing Wall. As their numbers increased, the Jews planned to change the status quo and on

23 September 1928 attempted to turn the place permanent Jewish temple. Muslims were provoked into to stop this change, but Jewish attempts continued, and in August 1929, they organized massive demonstrations that headed to the wall raising their Jewish flag and shouting anti-Arab slogans. They held a religious ceremony in the place and their religious leaders delivered provocative speeches that openly insulted Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) and the Muslim faith. This led to massive spontaneous Muslim demonstrations and developed into violent confrontations with Jews throughout the country especially in Al-Khalil and Safad. The clashes continued to spread and intensify forcing the British administration to seek reinforcements from other colonies, and the revolt continued for two weeks before it was crushed. It resulted in 133 deaths and 339 injuries among Jews, while the Arab's toll was 116 deaths and 232 injured, mostly inflicted by the British soldiers. More than 1200 Palestinians were persecuted and death sentences were issued against the three Palestinian leaders: Ata Al-Zeer, Mohammad Jamjoum and Fouad Hijazi who became national heroes. These sentences were expected as the Chief Judge, appointed by the British administration, was a British Zionist Jew by the name of Norman Bentwich.

"Green Palm" Group

It was the Palestinian secret military organization formed by a group of Palestinian militants in northern Palestine. It executed several successful attacks in October-December 1929. But it was rooted out after six months of extensive British-French military action. The group was, however, small and had no political support.

1933 Demonstration

With the increasing Jewish immigration, feelings of insecurity increased among Palestinians who started to target the British administration for its role in sponsoring and protecting the Zionist project. The Executive Arab committee, which represented the Palestinians at that time, declared the 13th of October as a day of general strike and a big demonstration was organized in Al-Quds. It was followed by a general strike and a massive demonstration in Yafa (Jaffa) on 27 October. The causalities were 35 martyrs and 255 injuries among the Arabs, and the killing of one British soldier.

Sheikh Al-Qassam Organization (*Al-Jihadiyyah*) in 1935

Shiekh Izz Addin Al-Qassam, originally a Syrian Muslim scholar and religious leader, waged 10-year extensive efforts to arrange for a systematic resistance through organizing military cells across Palestine, and by coordination with other resistance movements outside Palestine. Al-Qassam declared the revolt in November 1935, and moved to the mountains with a group of his colleagues who sold all their properties to buy guns and explosives. However, a huge British force composed of 400 men traced Al-Qassam and his 11 colleagues in Ya`bad near Jenin, and after a battle which lasted four and a half hours, Al-Qassam and two of his men were martyred, six were captured and two managed to flee. Although Al-Qassam was martyred, he became a role model, as his ten-year effort of preparation for a revolution bore fruit in the subsequent Great Palestinian Revolution of 1936.

The Great Palestinian Revolution (1936-1939)

This revolution is considered one of the most important and glorious milestones in the modern history of the Palestinian people as it managed to recapture most of the Palestinian countryside and some towns, and forced the British administration to retreat to major cities in the face of its overwhelming power. Had this revolution been in any other British colony, it would have compelled Britain to concede independence to the people. But the complex case of the Palestinian, and the British commitment to world Zionists, who formed a strong pressure group, deterred it from taking such action.

During this revolution the Palestinians demonstrated high loyalty, solidarity and organizational ability and presented the world with a historic heroic example: THE LONGEST STRIKE HELD BY ANY PEOPLE IN HUMAN HISTORY, the general strike of 1936 that lasted for 178 days.

The spark of the revolution was on 15 April 1936 when a group from *Al-Jihadiyyah*, founded by Al-Qassam and then led by the 75 year old legendary military leader, Farhan Al-Sa`di, killed two Jews in an attack near Nablus. A state of emergency was declared in the country and several Palestinian intellectuals formed a national committee to lead and direct the struggle.

A general strike and civil disobedience were declared, no taxes were to be paid to the British administration, and a daily average of 50 military operations around the country took place. The revolution demanded the stoppage of Jewish immigration and transfer of properties to the Jews, the handing of the affairs of the country to Arab local administration. The British administration in Palestine felt

helpless and asked for help, while the British government sent the Royal Committee (known as the Peel Committee) to report on the causes of the "disturbances" and to calm down the people. The revolutionary acts did not stop, however, until a group of kings and leaders from Saudi Arabia, Yemen, Iraq and Jordan urged the Palestinians to "resort to peace, to stop bloodshed, and to trust the good intentions of the British".

Palestinians called for a strike and civil disobedience on 12 October 1936, which marked the end of the first phase of the revolution. Though the British official report, in a seemingly attempt to underestimate the grievance of the revolution, claimed that Jewish causalities were 80 dead and 288 injured, British causalities were 35 deaths and 164 injured, and Arab causalities were 193 deaths and 803 injured. Other sources, like the medical administration in the city of Nablus, indicate that the British lost 162 soldiers in the first two months only. Furthermore, independent Arab sources indicated that Arab causalities were 750 martyrs and more than 1500 injured. Economically, the British administration, due to the general strike, lost 3.5 million pounds, that equaled to the then budget of Palestine for a whole year. The Palestinians lost several millions of pounds, and received only 20,000 as aid from Arabs and Muslims outside.

Meanwhile, all sides were impatiently waiting for the recommendations of Peel's Report before taking the next move. The report recommended the partition of Palestine into two states: one Jewish and the other Arab, with Jerusalem and Jaffa to remain under British mandate. Palestinians took up arms again in September 1937 in a much stronger resistance against the British and the Zionists.

British administration adopted the "iron fist" policy to crush the revolution and started executing its major political and military leaders. This policy had, however, backlashed and the resistance grew stronger. In summer 1938 the revolution reached its peak as Palestinian militants controlled 90% of Palestine, especially the rural areas and paraded in the streets of some major cities. Revolutionary leaders became the *de facto* administrators and the British aim was no longer to crush the revolution but to REOCCUPY Palestine.

In the summer of 1938, British forces faced their darkest days in Palestine as revolutionaries took control and collaborators were executed. British forces were almost totally cut off information. Suspecting that revolutionaries came from rural areas, they targeted all the rural people whom they could identify by the traditional head cover they used: *Al-Kufiyyah*. Soon after, however, the urban Palestinians were directed to remove their traditional urban head cover, the Turkish red cap (*Tarboosh*) and wear the rural cover, *Al-Kufiyyah*. Thus the British found themselves face to face with a whole nation of revolutionaries.

Britain felt the grave danger of losing Palestine, and preparations started to reoccupy it. Tens of thousands of men from the Imperial Army were redeployed in Palestine (they formed about one sixth of the army), under the leadership of some of the most talented officers in the British Empire like Haining and Montgomery, and a full-fledged military campaign was waged. But the revolutionaries stood firm. According to official British reports, during November 1938/ November 1939, British forces occupied 2088 villages, out of a total of 1000 villages, a clear indication of the stubborn resistance that they faced. The British often had to occupy

villages for two or three times before they could finally win the war in 1939.

The second phase of the revolution led to the death of some 500 Jews, and the injury of 1000, while the British toll was 1800 deaths and injured; the Palestinian toll was 3000 deaths and 7000 injured.

Although the revolution did not achieve independence, the British government was forced to issue the White Paper of 1939 that promised the Palestinians independence within 10 years, the stoppage of Jewish immigration in 5 years, and undertook to apply strict measures on property transfer to the Jews. The last two promises were partly fulfilled, but the first one was not, especially so as WWII soon started and an unfavorable balance of power to Palestinian ambitions, emerged.

Arab "Israeli" Wars

"Israel", as you may have seen, is a state founded and maintained by war. It was created over the territory occupied in the 1948 war, participated in a joint aggression with France and Britain against Egypt in 1956 and expanded in the 1967 war. In 1973, it was attacked by its Arab neighbors in an attempt to regain some of their shuddered self-confidence, but yet managed to maintain most of the territories it occupied. The last war came in 1982 in attempt to destroy the PLO's infrastructure in Lebanon. Altogether five wars, besides several offensives against Lebanon in 1978, 1980 and 1996, and the continuous military suppression of the Palestinians in the West Bank and Gaza Strip.

The Palestinian Catastrophe (1948 War)

1948 war is the most important event in the modern history of Palestine and of the Arabs and Muslims in general. It led to the expulsion of 60% of the population of Palestine, the loss of 77% of the land of Palestine, the separation of the eastern and western wings of the Muslim World, and the transplantation in its midst of an alien body that serves western imperialist interests in the area, namely the Zionist "State of Israel".

After the Great Palestinian Revolution (1936-1939) and WWII, the Palestinians were exhausted and in need for time to heal their ailing economic and political life. During that time, neighboring Arab countries were newly independent

and still under strong influence of their previous colonial masters, yet, they claimed the responsibility of preserving the Palestinian rights, thus depriving the Palestinians from establishing a united national leadership that could have better served their interests. Besides, some of the major Palestinian leaders like Haj Amin Al-Hussaini, were exiled and thus could not establish contact with the masses.

The armies of these newly independent Arab states were small, and ill equipped, and sometimes under the command of foreign generals. E.g. the Jordanian Arab Army that was led by John Glubb, a British General who ordered his soldiers during the 1948 war not to cross the borders drawn by the U.N. partition plan for the creation of two states, Palestinian and Jewish. Besides, Arab armies were not familiar with the topography of Palestine and some of them did not even have maps of the areas they were responsible for. The most important Arab force in this war was indeed Palestinian and Arab volunteers, especially Muslim Brothers from Egypt.

The Zionists, on the other hand, under British sponsorship, with no restrictions forced on their activities, established strong institutions, particularly paramilitary groups, under the name of "Jewish Colonies' Police", that were trained and armed by the British army. During WWII, the Jews participated in the British Imperial Army with a brigade composed of 26,000 soldiers who emerged as professional fighters. Besides, the Zionists were in a much better financial condition that enabled them to buy 24 airplanes and 1000 cars from the British departing Army as well as 40 airplanes and other huge amount of weapons from the Czech Republic.

Internationally, the post-World War politics were in favor of the Zionists who shifted their alliance to the United States

where they had increasing influence. Nazi execution of the Jews ignited the sympathy and support of the Western World to the establishment of a home for these victimized people.

Above all, it was of course not possible to achieve the Zionist dream in a Jewish homeland in Palestine without forcing the Palestinians out of their lands in order to create Jewish demographic superiority in the would-be Jewish State. While the U.N. partition plan, adopted in resolution 181, proposed a "Jewish State" that would house 498,000 Jews and 497,000 Arab Palestinians, i.e. it would not be full-fledged Jewish, especially if we bear in mind the high population growth rate among the Palestinians then (around 10%). Thus, the Zionists had no option but to forcefully expel these Arab inhabitants, who insisted to stay.

The 1948 war can be divided into two main phases: before the involvement of the Arab armies (December 1947-May 1948) and after this involvement (May-October 1948).

The Arab armies involved in this war were the Egyptian army (6,000 soldiers), the Syrian army (1,500 soldiers), the Iraqi army (1,500 soldiers), the Jordanian army (4,500 soldiers), the Saudi army (1,500 soldiers) and the Lebanese army (1000 soldiers). These numbers doubled during the war, the total number of Egyptian soldiers alone reached 20,000 by the end of the war. Besides these official Arab armies, other forces were involved:

Holy Jihad Army, led by Abdul Qader Al-Husaini. The army was composed of around 7,000 Palestinian fighters, with a further 3,000 reserve fighters to be called when needed, making the total of 10,000. This army was ill equipped and was deprived from many kinds of support from

the Arab Higher Committee, yet it made a heroic achievement throughout the war.

Arab Salvation Army, that was composed of 4630 Arab volunteers. It army was the least organized, but had better equipments than the first one.

Muslim Brothers, who fought either as parts of Holy Jihad and Salvation armies, or in a separate, highly organized force that played an important role in preserving the remaining parts of Palestine, especially Gaza Strip.

During the different phases of the war numbers were as follows:

In the first phase 12,000 Arab fighters facing 60,000 Zionist soldiers.

In the beginning of the second phase 21,000 Arabs vis-à-vis 67,000 Zionists.

By the end of the war: 40,000 Arabs against 106,000 Zionists.

The first phase (December 1947 until May 1948) was led by local Palestinian resistance that initially managed to keep 80-82% of Palestine, but they eventually lost control due to lack of weapons and supplies, especially after Al-Qastal Battle in 8 April, in which Abdul Qader Al-Husaini was killed. His forces ran out of ammunitions and supply after the captured Al-Qastal, and in the next day Irgun and Stern Zionist groups attacked the nearby village of Deir Yassin and committed the infamous massacre.

In 14 May the "State of Israel" was declared and in 15 May the British mandate ended and Arab forces entered Palestine. Arab armies managed to preserve their positions

until 11 June 1948 when a truce was imposed by a Security Council resolution. This truce enabled the Zionists to rearrange their forces and get new forces and weapons to the battlefield while Arab armies disarmed the local Palestinians to "maintain order!"

Zionists received 40 airplanes and huge quantity of weapons from Czech and entered the second round of fight with a new spirit. They captured Al-Lud (Lydda), Al-Ramleh, Annaserah (Nazareth) and some villages around Al-Quds (Jerusalem) in the period 9-17 July.

By 18 July Security Council imposed another truce that continued until 15 October, hence the Zionists started another offensive on southern Palestine in which they occupied Al-Naqab (Negev), Beer Assabe (Beersheba). Few Arab fighters had, however, remained steadfast such as a unit of the Egyptian Army in Al-Faloojah, and some Palestinian fighters in Sa sa to the north, but they were eventually driven out and their positions were captured, by the end of the war in 31 October after armistice with Egypt in February 1949. After this, Zionists forces launched their last offensive (6-10 March 1949) capturing the remaining parts of Al-Naqab (Negev) and Um Rashrash (Elat).

The war ended with a great catastrophe caused mainly by some fatal Arab mistakes. 60% of the Palestinians were expelled, 77% of their land was occupied to become the territory of the new "State of Israel".

The Triple Aggression (1956 war)

The 1948 catastrophe brought about many changes in the Arab World, revolutions and military coups took place in Egypt and Syria, while King Abdullah of Jordan was

assassinated and King Hussein sacked General Glubb Pasha from his position as chief of staff in the Jordanian army that was Arabized. Arab armies signed a treaty of common defense, and started to look for an alternative source of weapons apart from the West which monopolized this trade. Syria and Egypt concluded arms' deals with Czechoslovakia and USSR.

Egypt, who controlled the Gulf of Aqaba, tightened its surveillance over this waterway and through the Suez Canal. It supported and organized cross-borders military operations, creating a lot of trouble for "Israel". Meanwhile, the United States withdrew its offer to sponsor the Aswan Dam in southern Egypt, a vital project for the country's development, U.S. withdrew because Egypt refused to sign the "Baghdad Pact" that was signed by Iraq, Turkey, Iran, Pakistan and Jordan against communist ambitions in the area and pave the way for increasing American influence in the area. In retaliation, and to find an alternative source of funds, Egypt nationalized the Suez Canal that was controlled by a Franco-British company.

This triggered Britain and France, (the later being already fed up with Egyptian support to the Algerian revolution), to conspire with "Israel" to attack Egypt.

According to a pre-arranged plan, "Israel" launched, in 29 October 1956, a large-scale offensive through Sinai into Suez Canal, and on the 31st the French and British governments issued joint demands from both armies to withdraw 16 km from the canal on each side in order to guarantee safe navigation there. As expected, Egypt refused and thus giving the aggression a pretext to deploy their forces around the Suez Canal.

Egyptian airports and airforce were almost totally destroyed, and the Egyptians started concentrating on protecting and preserving the Canal so orders were issued to its forces to retreat from Gaza and Sinai to Suez. "Israeli" forces captured Gaza in three days and Sinai in eight days.

The United Nations issued a resolution on 2 November demanding the retreat of the attacking forces to pre-war positions. Nonetheless they tried to maintain their positions as long as possible, but were finally forced to withdraw under American-Soviet pressure. British and French forces left in 22 December, and "Israeli" forces withdrew in 6 March 1957 after a pledge from Egypt to stop cross-borders Palestinian operations, to allow an international force to observe the borders, and to grant "Israel" free movement in the waters and skies of Aqaba.

This war marked the practical end of the British and French imperial presence in the area and the beginning of American-Soviet presence there. It also showed the dramatic improvement in the "Israeli" military capabilities and the myth of the Egyptian striking power. Yet the war created a lot of sympathy with Egypt, and popularized its leader, Jamal Abd Al-Nasser as a hero.

The Second Catastrophe (1967 War)

"Israel" was not at all content with the amount of land she got in 1948, particularly as it had a long border with its Arab enemies (981 km) and some of its major cities were only 15 km away from the borders. This made the vital center of "Israel" vulnerable in case of military confrontation, especially so after the establishment of Fateh, and the military operations it launched inside "Israel". "Israel" was also

looking for more land in order to absorb more settlers, and to generate enough resources to sustain the "emerging nation".

At the same time the rhetoric that swept the Arab World, especially in the revolutionary regimes of Egypt and Syria, overestimated the military capabilities of the Arabs. Nasser of Egypt promised the Arabs that the decisive battle was approaching, and the Zionists would "be soon thrown in the sea". But in reality, the Egyptian military strategy was largely defensive during the years 1956-1966, and most of the defense budget was spent on the Egyptian forces supporting the revolution in Yemen rather than on those in Sinai and the borders.

The official rhetoric that no voice should supercede that of the battle was used as a cover up to deny the people their political freedoms, and to hide the slow economic growth, widespread corruption, negligence fraud and nepotism. Intelligence agencies were busy persecuting political opponents while "Israel" was improving fast in all spheres of life.

Inter-Arab relations had continuously deteriorated, the short-lived Egyptian-Syrian unity, declared in 1958 was soon revoked in 1961, and the decisions of the Arab summits to have a common defense strategy, and to create unified military command committee for the countries surrounding "Israel" came to nothing. On the contrary, continuous tension and political intrigues characterized inter-Arab relationships.

All that encouraged "Israel" to escalate its military offensive in the area. It committed the Al-Samu massacre killing 200 civilians and launched air raids across the northern borders to provoke Syria. The latter responded by heavy bombardment of the Zionist settlements in northern "Israel",

which "Israel" considered as an act of war and started in May 1967 to deploy huge forces along the Syrian borders.

Forced with this escalation, the Egyptian regime declared that any attack against Syria would mean war with Egypt, and demanded in 23 May the withdrawal of the U.N. observation units placed on the borders. It, furthermore, deployed three of its units in Sinai and closed the Gulf of Aqaba in the face of "Israeli" ships. The last two steps were clearly an act of war, but soon proved to be a mere bluff as the Egyptian army was not equipped or ready to fight in this front. In real terms, however, much of it was involved in Yemen to support the revolution, and the three units deployed haphazardly in Sinai were clearly not capable of protecting Egypt, let aside liberating Palestine.

The U.S. was aware of "Israeli" intentions and plans, and it provided "Israel" with intelligence reports on the status of the Egyptian army. On the insistence of both the U.S. and the USSR, then considered an ally of Egypt, Nasser undertook not to start the war, a promise that gave "Israel" a clear edge to start itself the first offinsive.

"Israel" launched its surprising attack in the morning of 5th June 1967, its war planes raided 9 Egyptians airports consecutively, and within three hours (8:45-12 noon), one raid every 10 minutes, 80% of the Egyptian air force was destroyed on the ground. The same happened to Jordanian and Syrian air forces, thus all the three Arab armies were left without air cover and became easy targets of the "Israeli" airplanes.

"Israeli" ground forces managed to cross the Egyptian borders in the same day, 5 June 1967, penetrating through Sinai and reached Suez Canal by the evening of the second

day of the war, 6 June 1967. The Egyptian Chief of staff instructed all Egyptian forces in Sinai to retreat within one night, and by the next day he informed the U.N. Secretary General that Egypt was ready to stop the war. Similarly, Jordanian defense collapsed on 6 June and it was a matter of time for the "Israelis" to advance and occupy the West Bank, by 7 June.

After annihilating the Egyptian and Jordanian forces, "Israel" launched a ground offensive on the Syrian front in 9 June, and controlled the strategic Golan Heights within a day, though the pompous Syrian leadership had promised the "Israelis" to find hell if they dared to attack it! By the 10^{th} of June 1967, the "Israelis" have conquered much more land than what they had in their wildest dreams. The promised "decisive" "Israeli" defeat turned out to be a total and humiliating Arab defeat, a catastrophe in fact.

The war resulted in 10,000 dead or missing Egyptian soldiers, 5500 captured, and the destruction of 80% of the Egyptian military machine including 800 tanks, 10,000 vehicles, 305 airplanes (out of 360). The Jordanian army lost 6094 soldiers, and 792 injured, while 150 tanks and 32 planes (out of 32) were destroyed. The Syrian army lost 1000 dead, 56 captured, 60 airplanes (out of 120). The "Israelis", on the other hand, lost only 764 dead, 2559 injured, 26 combat aircrafts and 10 cargo planes.

The rest of Palestine had now fell under occupation, 330,000 Palestinians were displaced as refugees of war, and "Israel" controlled the water springs in the north. From now onwards, Arab demands concentrated on to regaining lands occupied in 1967 instead of those occupied in 1948, destroying the armies of Egypt, Jordan and Syria and the

emergence of popular Palestinian resistance as the leading and most effective way to face "Israel". Furthermore, this loss had decisive effects on modern Arab culture; the revisionist trend that started previously in every aspect of Arab culture was strengthened aiming at reform that was not achieved until today.

Attack on "Israel" (1973 war)

The 1967 crushing defeat has been a catastrophe beyond comprehension, and a shock that needs time to be understood and overcome. In an attempt to calm down the boiling and angry masses, Arab leaders held a summit in Al-Khartoum in September 1967, that adopted the strategy of: "No peace, No negotiations, No recognition". They pledged to support Egypt, Jordan and Syria in rebuilding their armies, and to prepare for the coming confrontation. Meanwhile, a war of attrition continued during the period 1968-1970, between "Israel" on one side, and Syria and Egypt on the other side, in which launched several successful attacks against the "Israeli" who lost 500 dead and 2,000 wounded. Thus the Arabs restored some self-confidence.

Subsequently, preparations carefully planned for war to return some or all the lands that were lost in 1967 and to regain some of the lost dignity. i.e. a war to "remove the effects of the 1967 aggression". Syria and Egypt formed a common military operation room in 10 January 1973 that decided a synchronized attack from both sides, and the two presidents took the decision of war in 25 February 1973.

"Israel" was skeptical about the Egyptian-Syrian intentions. It declared minimal emergency on 24 September 1973, called the reserve troops in 3 October and declared

maximum emergency in 5 October. By then, the “Israeli” leadership was sure that Syria and Egypt were planning a war.

In 6 October 1973, Syrian and Egyptian forces synchronically launched attack with heavy artillery and conducted air raids at exactly the same time. 300 Syrian and Egyptian planes were involved in this operation.

On the Egyptian front ground forces installed mobile bridges on the Suez Canal, and Egyptian tanks and armored vehicles crossed to the other bank. Egyptian forces managed to destroy Barlev Defense Line, the “Israeli” first defense line that was considered to be one of the safest defense lines in the world. In few hours, the Egyptians bypassed Barlev line and marched until, within 3 days, they reached 15 km east to the Canal. Then they made a three-day “tactical stop”. This created trouble for the Syrians, as the “Israelis” were now free to devote their attention to the northern front. They waged a counter attack by which they reoccupied the Golan, together with another 550 km^2 of Syrian lands in what was known as “the pocket of Sa‘sa‘”, and stopped 25 km only from Damascus, the Syrian capital. Syrians demanded that Egyptian forces penetrate as planned 50 km deep in Sinai, and capture the passageways there. But the Egyptians had decided right from the beginning to stop after 15 km only, or else they will loose their protective missile shield and be vulnerable to “Israeli” airplanes. They tried to help the Syrians by moving east, but they lost 250 tanks and decided to retreat to their positions. President Sadat was not looking for a decisive victory or for total liberation, but aspired for a limited victory that would strengthen his bargaining position in a negotiated peace with “Israel”. And so it was.

The "Israelis" took advantage of the Egyptian tactical stop and of the American air bridge that supplied them with high tech weapons, especially the Tow anti-tank shells that inflected damage on the Egyptian Soviet-made tanks. They waged their counter attack against Egypt under the leadership of Sharon who managed to penetrate in Egyptian mainland, and besiege the third Egyptian army from behind. He was 35 km deep in Egyptian mainland when the Security Council issued a resolution demanding immediate ceasefire. Egyptian forces accepted the resolution, but Sharon continued his way until he stopped 101 km from Cairo.

The Syrians received aid from Iraq, Jordan and Saudi Arabia. They planned a counterattack, but on the Egyptian acceptance of truce, they had no choice but to follow it.

Arab countries showed strong solidarity with Egypt and Syria. Gulf countries declared a total ban of petrol exports to the U.S. and Holland, and reduced its supply by 25%. This ban resulted in 'a substantial rise in petrol prices -that benefited petrol exporters later on- and drew the attention in industrial of the societies to the magnitude of danger that they faced as a result of the injustice done to the Palestinian people.

No agreed-upon figures are available for the losses in this war, especially for the Arabs. Arab sources mentioned that "Israel" lost 2552 dead while Egyptian causalities were 7700 and that of Syria amounted to 3500. Other Arab sources state that "Israel" lost in the first few days 5,000 dead, 400 prisoners, 800 tanks and 120 airplanes. "Israeli" sources state that on the Syrian front, "Israelis" lost 772 dead, 2453 wounded, 65 prisoners, 250 tanks and 102 airplanes were destroyed.

The war resulted in ridiculing the myth of the invincibility of the "Israeli" army. It restored to Arab soldiers self-confidence, created high Arab solidarity, and finally gave the Egyptian leadership a room for negotiations with "Israel" as strong and capable partners.

Invasion of Lebanon (1982 War)

Since Lebanon has been the only remaining active front for the PLO, "Israel" decided to root out Palestinian military existence in the northern border. Attempts to destroy Palestinian bases in Lebanon started since the early 1970s, and increased during the civil war in Lebanon that gave the "Israelis" more room for maneuver. The first large scale offensive came in 1978 when "Israel" occupied parts of southern Lebanon and formed a "security zone" there in active collaboration with the militia there, known as the "South Lebanon Army".

After 1973 war, Arab governments seemed to have ruled out the possibility of a military action against "Israel", especially after their leader, Egypt, signed a peace treaty with "Israel" in 1978. Since then, "Israel" became confident that she could go into any military adventure against the Palestinians without facing any meaningful Arab military response.

"Israel" launched this war under the pretext of protecting its northern border from Palestinian frequent military operations and missiles. Though these operations were legitimate resistance operations, even by the standards of the U.N., it is very important to note that the northern "Israeli" border was almost completely calm during the period from July 1981 until 4 June 1982. No cross-border operation or any missile firing took place from the Palestinian side during this

period. The same period however witnessed 2125 "Israeli" violations of the Lebanese airspace and 652 violations of Lebanese waters, besides few ground violations of Lebanese lands, not to mention, of course, the "security zone" which is a Lebanese occupied land. During this period, the PLO was preoccupied with internal conflicts with Lebanese Christian Maronite militias, who had frequently targeted Palestinian camps, causing heavy death toll among the civilians.

All these factors encouraged the "Israeli" government, supported by its ally the Christian Maronite militia, to wage a massive military adventure in Lebanon that aimed to annihilate the Palestinian bases in the tiny country.

In 4 June 1982 "Israel" mobilized an estimated number of 125-150 thousand soldiers (out of 170 thousands who form the whole professional army) that was backed with 1600 tank, 1600 armored personnel carriers, 600 pieces of heavy artillery and missile launchers and heavy air coverage. More than two thirds of the "Israeli" army was then in Lebanon, as it did not expect Arab military action at any of the other fronts.

With the help of the Christian militias, who welcomed this sizable "Israeli" force, they marched to the gates of Beirut, the Lebanese capital, in 9 June 1982.

The Syrian army, which deployed an estimated well-equipped 20,000 soldiers in southern Lebanon, tried to counter the "Israeli" attack. But within 72 hours the "Israelis" destroyed the Syrian missile system, and shot down 100 Syrian combat airplanes. The Syrian ground forces had thus lost their air cover and were forced to retreat. The Syrian army was officially out of the battle by 11 June 1982, 7 days after the war started.

Palestinian forces, around 11,000 fighters, gathered in west Beirut to face the invasion side by side with the national Lebanese resistance and unit 85 of the Syrian army that was assigned to west Beirut before the war. East Beirut, which was under the control of the Maronite militias, was handed over to the "Israeli" army. With enormous power at their disposal, and in spite of air raids, missiles, and marine destroyers shelling the coast, heavy artillery and tanks, the "Israelis" could not enter Beirut. The bloody battle continued for 65 days, (9 June-12 August 1982) during which around 15,000 civilians were killed, 30,000 were injured and the city was almost completely destroyed. The battle ended by a U.N. sponsored agreement by which the Palestinians were to leave Beirut and Lebanon safely, and the "Israelis" would withdraw. The Palestinians accepted this deal and left Lebanon by 31 August 1982, to spare the lives of the remaining civilians in the area, especially in the Palestinian camps. The "Israelis", however, did not keep their word, and soon after the departure of the Palestinian forces they and their Maronite allies invaded west Beirut, and established a Maronite rule over the city. During this period they provided cover and support for the Christian Maronite militias who committed the massacre of Sabra and Shatila, killing 3297 Palestinian and Lebanese civilians in less than 36 hours.

"Israel" concluded an agreement with the Christian leader of Al-Kata'eb militia, Basheer Jmayyel by which they helped him become the president of Lebanon, and establish a pro-"Israeli" entity in the area. Jmayyel was assassinated four days after his assumption of Presidency.

Soon after, Lebanese national resistance bombed and destroyed the "Israeli" headquarters in Lebanon killing 75

soldiers. It also attacked the Multinational power that was deployed in Lebanon under the suspicious auspices of protecting civilians. Both the American and French headquarters were devastated killing 239 American soldiers, and 71 French servicemen, Lebanon was thus almost cleared from foreign presence, although civil war continued and the Syrian forces returned to their bases in Lebanon.

"Israel" withdrew partially in 4 September 1983, and was later forced, under fierce Lebanese resistance, to withdraw from more areas in 14 January 1985. By June 1985 "Israel" remained only in its "security zone", that was guarded by the collaborationist South Lebanon Army. Ultimately, it was forced by the Islamic Lebanese resistance to withdraw from this zone in May 2000. However, "Israel" still occupies a small part of Lebanese lands, known as "Shab`a Farms", and Hizbullah is continuing its military operations to expel them from there.

The most important result of the 1982 war was that Palestinian resistance lost its last line of contact with home, and was forced to leave and establish its headquarters in Tunisia. It was after this war that an important segment of the PLO initiated the strategy of negotiations that called for peace talks with "Israel", as the military resistance was no more possible from outside Palestine.

Palestinian Resistance 1949-1987

• 1949-1967

The 1948 war was a serious catastrophe for the Palestinians, and around 60% of them became property-less refugees. Almost all social infrastructures were seriously damaged and much time was needed for these deep wounds to heal.

Meanwhile, neighboring Arab countries won their independence, and people thus hoped that their governments and the huge armies that they built, would do something to lift this injustice, especially as they had taken charge of the Palestinian affairs and blocked the formation of an independent Palestinian entity on the remaining parts of Palestine (West Bank and Gaza Strip). Nonetheless, the newly expelled refugees continued the resistance and tried to access their homes at every possible opportunity, get back some of their lost properties or to avenge the great suffering inflected upon them in the catastrophe. The same period witnessed heated political activity, and the spread of different ideologies that was facilitated by the absence of old traditional social loyalties. The year 1952, for example witnessed 1533 cross-border operations from Jordan alone (4.2 operations per day), which became since 1953 more effective and organized as they were carried out by some newly formed *Fida'yyin* military organizations (*Fida'yyin* is the Arabic term for the

Palestinian fighters). Both the West Bank and Gaza Strip witnessed the formation of many political groups that had their military wings. The total "Israeli" death toll in 1948-1956 reached 1176.

"Israel" always responded with excessive use of power against the civilians across the borders to force the Arab governments to take action against the *Fida'yyin* . Several massacres were committed in Qibya (67 civilians killed), Qalqiliya (70 civilians killed), and Gaza (39 civilians killed). The last massacre triggered a forceful demand to the Egyptian government to organize Palestinian military resistance, which it accepted and sent a professional Egyptian officer for this purpose. For one year he led a resistance that caused much trouble to "Israel".

The most important event in that period was the emergence of the Fateh organization in 1959. Young Palestinian activists, were fed up with the meaningless and futile Arab rhetoric of Arab unity as a pre-requisite for the liberation of Palestine as it was even more difficult than the liberation itself! They knew that the then Arab claim of representation of the Palestinian people was geared towards domestic political gains and was not for the good of Palestine. Hence it was their decision to take up the duty by themselves. Fateh executed its first operation on 1 January 1965 and carried out 200 operations in 1965-1967.

Normally, Fateh was strongly opposed by Arab officials who dismissed its leaders as "collaborators with the Imperialistic powers" and a "paramilitary" in the Arab body. Many of its leaders, including Yasser Arafat, were jailed and tortured in Arab countries, and some died in prisons.

- **1967-1987**

The most important development in this period was that the Palestinians took the lead in the struggle for the first time since the 1936 revolution. The humiliating Arab defeat in 1967 profoundly shocked and frustrated the people who could not imagine the defeat of 6 Arab armies, including revolutionary Egypt and Syria. This boosted the credibility of Fateh who had cautioned against such developments well before the 1967 defeat. Palestinian *Fida'yyin* military groups were seen as the last hope for liberation, and increasing numbers of people joined their training camps in Jordan and later on in Lebanon, while Egypt and Syria closed their borders to Palestinian military operations, although they supported the organizations operating on Jordanian and Lebanese soils.

Another important boost for the *Fida'yyin* was Al-Karama Battle on 21 March 1968 in Jordan in which a group of 150 Palestinian militants, covered with a Jordanian artillery brigade, managed to encounter a massive "Israeli" force across the borders. The "Israeli" losses were 70 soldiers killed ("Israelis" claimed that only 28 were killed), 100 injuries, 45 tanks, 25 armored soldier carriers and 27 other machines, while the Palestinians lost 17 men, and 20 martyred and 65 injured in the Jordanian army. Within 48 hours of this victory, Fateh received 5000 applications for membership, for the news of the heroic Arab achievement and the relatively high "Israeli" causalities restored Palestinian and Arab self-confidence. Fateh soon managed to dominate the Palestinian Liberation Organization (PLO) that was established by the Arab League. The PLO had then become the umbrella under which all Palestinian organizations operated with Fateh in the

lead and Yasser Arafat elected as the President of PLO in February 1969.

Soon after, PLO found itself dragged into a battle with the Arab brothers in the host country, Jordan. In September 1970 the Jordanian army tried to eradicate the Palestinian forces that came to be seen as a source of serious threat to the Jordanian regime and internal stability, hence was the so-called "Black September". Although both sides reached an agreement under Egyptian sponsorship, and the Palestinian forces were redeployed in certain agreed upon camps in northern Jordan, another massive Jordanian campaign started in July 1971 aiming at eliminating the *Fida'yyin* , who were eventually driven out of the country.

Since then, only the Lebanese front was left open for Palestinian military activities. During this period, the PLO grew bigger and stronger, reaching the number of 15,000 professional fighters, and it executed some successful complicated operations, especially by the Black September Organization that formed a worldwide organic body targeting Zionist interests wherever they were.

The "Israeli" army waged many attacks on the *Fida'yyin* bases in Lebanon, but small-scale attacks did not achieve what they aimed at. The "Israelis", determined to silence the northern front, waged a large campaign in 1978 in which the "Israeli" army conquered southern Lebanon and established a security zone there, killing 700 Palestinians and Lebanese mostly civilians. The second "Israeli" campaign, in August 1980, failed as the Palestinian forces, centered in Al-Shaqeif Castle, managed to stop the "Israeli" forces that were 15 times the size of the Palestinian forces and were equipped with all kinds of artillery, armor and air cover. "Israelis" were

forced to retreat and stop the offensive after the heavy losses they suffered. In July 1981, "Israeli" artillery and warplanes heavily bombarded southern Lebanon killing 150 and wounding 600 Palestinians and Lebanese, but were forced to stop after the Palestinian resistance responded with heavy fire on 30 military and civilian sites in northern "Israel".

The "Israelis" were back in the battlefield in 1982, and the two sides fought a 4 months war before the PLO was forced to leave Lebanon after the serious damage of its infrastructure, and in order to avoid further losses among civilians, who were, as usual, deliberately and excessively targeted by the "Israeli" army, to force the fighters to stop.

The ultimate "Israeli" target, that is to secure the northern borders, was not achieved after all because Lebanese resistance emerged soon after, and started cross-border operations to force "Israel" to retreat to pre-1978 borders, a demand that was ultimately achieved in 2000.

After 1982, the PLO lost all bases for its operations, and new tactics were most wanted. Some fighters, including Arafat, managed clandestinely to return to north Lebanon and cooperate with Lebanese resistance, but they were again forced to leave in 1984. The solution had to come in the form of a total shift in the arena of the struggle, which had, anyhow, been achieved in 1987 when the first intifada erupted inside Palestine, exactly in the land that the arrogant "Israelis" have considered to be their backyard.

Resistance Never Ended

For the last 21 years before 1987, Palestinian resistance had come from outside the areas occupied by "Israel", mainly from the *Fida'yyin* camps in neighboring Arab countries. But this condition had drastically changed by the consecutive decisions of the Arab frontline countries to close their frontiers to Palestinian fighters.

After its forced departure from Lebanon in 1982, the PLO established its new headquarters in remote Tunisia that was too far for any meaningful resistance to the occupation, thus turning the PLO headquarters into a mere bureaucratic administration. At the same time, PLO fighters were scattered around the world in Jordan, Syria, Iraq, Yemen, Algeria, Sudan and other countries. Attempts were thus made to revive military action against "Israel", through establishing connections inside the West Bank and Gaza Strip, and some successful military operations were carried out against settlers in Al-Khalil, Al-Quds and other areas.

Besides, the Islamic trend was growing across the Arab World and in Palestine, a development that resulted in the emergence of new popular Islamic Palestinian movements inside Palestine, namely Hamas and Islamic Jihad, which played an important role in stimulating the "Palestinian insiders" politically and militarily.

This increasing patriotic and Islamic feelings inside Palestine, coupled with the accumulating tension created by

the humiliating and oppressive "Israeli" policies, prepared the ground for the explosive outbreak of the first intifada in 8 December1987.

Intifada

For many observers, this intifada was one of the noblest incidents in human history because it demonstrated social solidarity, loyalty and determination for the achievement of freedom, the basic goal of any people. The intifada had, furthermore, transformed weakness into strength in a very surprising and innovative manner. Though they had almost nothing to fight with, and should have logically acquired weapons before indulging in any fight, the Palestinians insisted to fight with the only weapon they had, the stone. This stone fight could not have possibly inflicted damage on the enemy, but it was meant to, to tell the "Israelis" and the world that the Palestinians say "NO" to occupation, and having no weapons cannot hinder the expression of a people's will.

The spark that ignited the intifada was, at large, several provocations made by "Israeli" settlers and occupation soldiers, the latest being on 8 December 1987, in Gaza, where 4 Palestinians were killed and at least 7 wounded by a deliberate collision between an "Israeli" truck and 2 vans full of Palestinian workers returning from work in "Israel". 4000 angry demonstrators attended the funeral for those killed. A whole nation, children and adults, men and women, Muslim and Christians took to the streets facing this injustice with all possible weapons: throwing stones at settlers, or using knives and handmade Molotov Cocktails against occupation soldiers; while the enemy had, on the other side, used machine guns, tear gas, snipers, armored vehicles and tanks. Nonetheless,

this unfair confrontation did not frighten the Palestinians or bring them to their knees; on the contrary, it stimulated them to offer more sacrifices for the sake of freedom. The message was clear to "Israel" and the rest of the world: this is how flesh defeats armor. The word "intifada" was coined to mean revolution and resistance in the dictionaries of most of the world's living languages, including English.

"Israel" announced that the intifada will be met with an "Iron Fist Policy" which involved severe beatings (termed "bone breaking"), mass arrests and detentions, deportations, home demolitions, destruction of private property, and the use of live ammunition and rubber bullets. The first year of the intifada ended with 318 Palestinians killed, 20000 wounded, 15000 arrested, 12000 jailed, 34 deported, and 140 houses demolished, while 8 Israelis were killed (6 civilians, 2 soldiers).

During the first four years of the intifada, the Palestinians managed to purify their society from collaboration, drugs, prostitution and other social diseases. Popular committees were formed in every quarter to look after the needs of the residents, coordinate efforts and communicate with other cities and with the countryside under the command of the Unified Leadership of the Uprising (UNLU), formed in 11 January 1988, that declared national disobedience.

The intifada attracted the attention of the whole world and became a central theme in world news, the myth of "Israel" being the "oasis of democracy in the Middle East" was ridiculed forever, and the real face of "Israel" as a colonial power built on the deprivation of others was revealed to everybody. The Palestinian issue, marginalized for a while, was back at the top of global political concerns. The

Palestinians had also managed to restructure their economy in order to sustain a long-term struggle. Thus "Israeli" products that flooded Palestinian markets were boycotted, and new local substitutions emerged creating more job opportunities. This was a top priority for Palestinians, as 39% of their workforce used to work inside "Israel" as daily-paid workers. After the intifada only 12.3% of Palestinian workforce needed to go to "Israel" for work.

The intifada ended in 1993 when the PLO signed the Oslo agreements with "Israel", marking the beginning of the Middle East Peace Process that ended by the second intifada of Al-Aqsa 2000.

During the years of the first intifada (1987-1993) Palestinian losses were 1540 martyrs amongst them 353 children under the age of 16; 130000 wounded and 116000 detainees for different periods. Lands confiscated during these years reached 457 km^2 and 770 houses were demolished.

After the Intifada

Although the official leadership of the PLO signed the Oslo Accord with "Israel" and exchanged letters of mutual recognition, other important movements like Hamas, Islamic Jihad and the Popular Front, did not accept the peace settlement and continued their military resistance against "Israel" throughout the short span of the peace process. Meanwhile, they faced bitter opposition and oppressive reaction from the Palestinian National Authority, formed mainly by Fateh, as the destruction of these groups was a basic requirement of the Oslo Accord. Palestinians could have then indulged in a civil war if Hamas and Al-Jihad responded militarily to the oppressive measures they faced from the

Authority, but they wisely did not. Thus the Palestinians managed to overcome this dark period and to consolidate their national unity during the years of the second intifada.

The Tunnel Uprising (1996)

Negotiating with Arafat, "Israel" decided to allow the opening of a tunnel under Al-Aqsa Mosque that threatened the very existence of the Mosque. This triggered an immediate Palestinian response, and they rushed to the scene to prevent this disastrous action from taking place. "The Israeli" army faced the Palestinians with excessive force, using tanks and Apache Helicopters to suppress demonstrations. On the other side, the Palestinian security forces formed by the Palestinian Authority, rallied in support of these demonstrations.

The incidences continued for 3 days, resulting in 62 deaths and 1600 injured among the Palestinians. The "Israeli" casualties were 14 deaths and 50 injuries, all soldiers. It was during these days that "Israel" laid down the military plan to reoccupy the West Bank that was executed in March 2002. These incidences were thus alarming indicators of the forthcoming confrontation, notwithstanding the peace treaties.

The Liberation of Southern Lebanon

As you may have seen in discussion on the resistance during 1948-1987, "Israeli" forces attacked the PLO bases in Lebanon during their massive squad of 1978 and the war of 1982, by which they created a security zone in southern Lebanon to ensure the security of northern "Israel". This goal had, however, proved to be impossible to attain, especially after the emergence of Lebanese national and Islamic

resistance that took over the struggle after the evacuation of PLO forces in 1982. Resistance operations intensified after the end of the civil war in Lebanon in 1991. The Islamic resistance, represented mainly by Hizbullah, carried out a series of operations, and frequently fired Katyushia missiles at populated areas in northern "Israel". The "Israelis" launched strong attacks in 1993 and 1996 to vanquish Hizbullah, and used their well-known tactic of targeting civilians to weaken the stand of militants. But they failed as the people stood firm behind the resistance that had, in fact, inflicted substantial damage on the "Israeli" forces working in the security zone. The price was far beyond what "Israel' could afford and it was forced to withdraw in 24 May 2000, two months before the declared deadline and without any prior notice even to the collaborating forces of the South Lebanon Army that have served "Israeli" interests in the area for 22 years, an irony that showed the "Israeli" determination to escape the "hell of south Lebanon", and a clear demonstration that a resistance movement may face and humiliate a major power owning weapons of mass-destruction. The Liberation of south Lebanon touched the feelings of the frustrated Palestinians, and was one of the reasons for the outbreak of the second intifada just four months later.

Al-Aqsa Intifada (Sep. 28th 2000-Oct.2001)

Reasons:

Although, the way to the explosion was already paved, the visit of Sharon, the leader of the Likud Party, to al-Aqsa Mosque sparked this explosion: the path was blocked before the peaceful settlements negotiations, the Israelis were totally obstinate in terms of the Palestinian refugees issue and

settlements, and they continued to confiscate lands. Additionally, they were unintended to waive or to apply the international resolutions when the matter is stipulated in the essential clauses? Further, Barak saw that the only solution was to prompt the whole situation to explosion, as he said in a secret meeting on Oct. 25th 2000.[1]

Results:

Al-Aqsa intifada resulted in clarifying some significant facts including:

First, the Muslim nation is still alive in spite of its gaping wounded body. It can resist, sacrifice itself and unite in hard times. There were hundreds of thousands of demonstrations all over the Muslim world.

Second, the Palestinian issue is the only issue at which all Muslims converge.

Third, the intifada unveiled the ugly face of the peaceful settlements and normalization the relations with Israel and proved their failure in terms of reality.

Fourth, this intifada shifted the way in which people used to think and to lead their life; and so Israel became strongly opposed and the US got thoroughly abhorrent. Responding to the call of boycotting the US and Israeli goods, millions of people changed their life style (kinds of foods, drinks, and even ways of entertainment). It was a comprehensive, social and popular school leading to results that might need years to be reaped by reform movements. This resulted in heavy losses in the US and Israeli corporations.

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[1] *Al-Khalij Magazine*, Nov. 10th 2000.

Fifth, the significance of mass media and its important role emerged through this intifada via the Arabic satellite-channels that uncovered the news blackout by the Zionists.

On the other hand, this intifada is distinguished by the unity of all the Palestinian people and factions. Simultaneously, it is distinguished by a severe repression practiced by the Israelis; they went too far in murdering the innocent and children using internationally prohibited weapons. The Palestinians, however, were heroically steady and courageous. Moreover, the Israeli entity devastated nearly 5,000 houses, uprooted 200,000 trees and bombarded 95 schools. The severe siege the Israelis imposed on the Palestinians caused 218 villages to suffer from excessive thirst. The ratio of unemployment rose from 11% to 57% among the people of the Gaza Strip and the West Bank. Thusly, the Palestinians victimized by these atrocities reached 1,000,270. In other words, the Palestinians who live under poverty level reached 50%. Briefly, the Palestinian nascent economy lost nearly $ 7.5 billions.

However, the Arab Labor party estimated the Palestinian losses at $ 19,000,000 a day. (Seemingly it included the indirect losses). It estimated the daily losses of the labor force at $ 6.6 million, of commerce at $ 5.5 million, of industry at $ 3.3 million and of agriculture at $ 3.2 millions. Additionally, the Zionists shot the Palestinians deliberately intending to kill them, not to disperse the demonstrations or even to defend themselves against the stones of the demonstrators.

Chapter Six

Palestinian Liberation Movements and Organizations

(1) Palestinian Liberations Organization (PLO)

Background and Establishment

The emergence of the different Palestinian movements, the success of the Algerian Revolution in achieving national independence to its people in 1962, and the failure of the unity that was proclaimed between Syria and Egypt 1958-1961, all were developments that urged the establishment of a Palestinian representative body before things went out of control. Understanding this, the Egyptian President, Nasser, appointed Ahmad Al-Shuqairi as the representative of Palestine in the Arab League in 1963 and handed him the mission of studying the Palestinian Question and possible ways to address it. Consequently, in January 1964, the Arab League revived its decision taken in 1959, to establish a Palestinian representative body. Al-Shuqairi took advantage of the favorable political atmosphere and made intensive contacts with the Palestinians of the West Bank, the Gaza Strip and of the diaspora. During this period, he drew the first

Palestinian Charter and the Basic Law of the Palestinian Liberation Organization. The fruit of his efforts came in the first Palestinian National Council that convened in Amman from 28 May-2 June 1964, and proclaimed the Palestinian Liberation Organization (PLO) with Mr. Al-Shuqairi as its President.

The establishment of the PLO was received skeptically by the Palestinian movements, especially Fateh. The turning point, however, was the 1967 Arab catastrophe that shuddered all hopes of a liberation war, proved the futility of Arab rhetoric and boosted the position of liberation movements, especially Fateh. The Palestinians were then determined to take initiative by themselves and get rid of any form of Arab patronage. Al-Shuqairi was forced in December 1967, under these pressures, to resign and allow the Palestinian resistance movements to take their natural role in leading the Palestinian people. In July 1968, the fourth Palestinian National Council enacted the necessary reformations, redrafting The Palestinian National Charter and limiting membership of the Palestinian National Council (PNC) to 100. From 1-4 February 1969, the Fifth Palestinian National Council convened, gave all the power in the PLO to the Palestinian liberation movements and elected Yasser Arafat as President of the PLO.

Developments

Throughout its struggle, the PLO faced many obstacles, suffered defeats and achieved victories. The main achievement of the PLO is that it managed, in October 1974 to win recognition of the Arab summit, the Movement of Non-Allied Nations, the Organization of Islamic Conference (OIC), and the U.N. as the sole legitimate representative of the Palestinian people, ending the long dispute with Jordan

over the representation of the Palestinians and forcing "Israel" to accept the PLO as the only negotiating partner on behalf of the Palestinians. Furthermore, the PLO was awarded an observer status in the U.N. in the same year.

In 1970 the PLO entered a bloody confrontation with the Jordanian army and was forced to leave Jordan. The remaining PLO bases in Lebanon suffered much during the Lebanese civil war and were continuously targets of "Israeli" military action. The 1982 war forced the PLO to leave Lebanon, and to reestablish its headquarters in Tunisia, quite far from home, depriving the organization from the grounds it needed to launch military resistance against "Israel". Consequently, the PLO was dragged to accept a negotiated settlement, that came in the Oslo Accords in 1993. The accords established the Palestinian National Authority (PNA), which took over most of the functions of the PLO and marginalized its political role.

Bodies of the PLO

- **Palestinian National Council (PNC)**

It is the highest authority in the organization; it works as the Parliament of the PLO and is responsible for drawing the main policies and the strategic goals. It also monitors the performance of the PLO's executive leadership. It is composed of representatives of popular movements inside the PLO, leaders of students and trade unions, besides independent figures recommended by the executive leadership. It is supposed to convene annually, but the political complications and the conditions of the Palestinian diaspora made the consistency of its conventions impossible. Since the 1970s, the council convened once every 3-5 years, and if the PLO executive

leadership feels the need for making political changes. The main milestones of the PNC is the fourth council of 1964 that drew the Palestinian National Charter, the 12th council of 1974 that adopted the 10-Point Program, the 19th council of 1988 that recognized Security Council resolutions as valid bases for negotiated settlement, and the 21st council of 1996 that abandoned all anti-"Israeli" provisions of the Charter. The PNC is supposed to be composed of 100 members only, but its members reached 604 in the aforementioned 1996 council; most of them are independent figures appointed by the President.

- **The Central Council**

It was formed at the 11th Palestinian National Council in 1973 as a mediating body between the PNC and the Executive Committee, and to perform the duties of the PNC when it is not convening, especially that intervals between PNC conventions were continuously increasing. It was first composed of 32 members and was supposed to convene every two months. The Central Council faced the same fate of the National Council; the number of its members increased to 124 in 1996 and therefore faced the same operational obstacles.

- **Executive Committee**

It is the highest executive authority in the PLO, and is practically the real authority in the organization, it acts as the Palestinian government and the PNC elects its members who elect the president in turn. It is composed of 18 members, including the president.

- **PLO Bureaus**

The PLO has several bureaus that are similar in composition to conventional governments, most important of which are:

Secretariat, Political Bureau, Military Bureau, National Fund, Bureau of Occupied Lands' Affair, Bureau of Education and Higher Education, Bureau of Arab Relations, Bureau of information, Bureau of Popular Organization, Bureau of Social Affairs and Bureau of Administrative Affairs.

(2) The Palestinian National Authority (PNA)

Background and Establishment

The Palestinian National Authority was established by the Oslo Accord between the Palestinian Liberation Organization (PLO) and "Israel". The accord provided a Palestinian self-rule over the areas from which "Israel" withdraws according to future agreements between both sides. This self-rule should be gradually expanded to include all the West Bank and Gaza Strip, based on the U.N. resolutions. The Authority is composed of an elected legislative council and a government with 80% of its members from the legislative council, and with an elected chairman as its head. In January 1996 elections were held across most of the West Bank and the Gaza Strip; 88 members of the Legislative Council were elected and Yasser Arafat was elected as Chairman of the National Authority. The 10-movement coalition that opposed Oslo, composed from popular movements like Hamas, Islamic Jihad and Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine (PFLP), boycotted the elections. It was still the first elections in which a large portion of the Palestinian people could democratically elect their representatives. Fateh managed to get almost half of the seats in the Legislative Council and controlled, together with some independent sympathizers, most of the institutions of the PNA.

The Authority, as agreed in Oslo, undertook to secure "Israel" from Palestinian military resistance, and therefore established huge security forces that were used for most of the time to suppress Palestinian movements like Hamas and Al-Jihad. The administrative and security bodies of the PNA grew disproportionately (for example, there was a branch of Marine forces in Nablus that is 30 km away from the nearest coast), and scores of nepotism and corruption were evident in the Authority that was increasingly concentrated in the hands of its chairman.

The authority was given full control over 17% of the West Bank (1000km^2), termed as Area A, and 55% of the Gaza Strip (200 km^2), with some 25% of West Bank under partial civil control, termed as area B. All in all, the PNA's real control was over 1200 km^2, or 4.4% of the area of Historical Palestine, most of which were areas of Palestinian population concentration. The authority further was not given control over borders and water resources, and did not have safe passages between its scattered territorial enclaves.

(3) Fateh

Background and Establishment

Fateh is an Arabic acronym for "The Movement for the Liberation of Palestine". It was founded in 1959 by a group of Palestinian youth, who came from the most popular movement of that time, the Muslim Brotherhood. They met on the idea of organizing a form of resistance against "Israel" that will accommodate all Palestinians willing to fight "Israel", regardless of their ideological backgrounds. This project was first presented to the Palestinian Muslim Brothers but did not set the attention it deserved. The founders, however, were not discouraged and continued to work on the establishment of an independent Palestinian secular organization, which was achieved in 1959 by Yasser Arafat, Khalil Al-Wazir, Salah Khalaf and Kamal Adwan and few others. Fed up with the futile Arab rhetoric that prevailed at that time, these activists worked for the creation of an independent Palestinian body that speaks for Palestinian rights and undertakes the preservation of these rights through popular resistance, mainly from outside Palestine, as a means for liberation, and for dragging the Arab governments into military confrontation with "Israel" that will ultimately liberate Palestine. Fateh bravely reversed the prevailing rhetoric of the progressive revolutionary Arab regimes which claimed that Arab unity is a pre-requisite for the liberation of Palestine, as the former turned out to be more difficult than liberation itself.

The humiliating 1967 Arab defeat boosted the stand of Fateh, who had predicted such an outcome, as the remaining hope for the Arabs. The major event that brought Fateh's credibility to its peak was Al-Karamah Battle on 21 March 1968 in which the Palestinian forces, covered with Jordanian heavy artillery managed to block an "Israeli" squad killing 70 soldiers, injuring 100, and destroying 45 tanks, 25 armored soldier carriers and 27 other machines, while the Palestinians lost 17 men, and 20 were martyred and 65 injured in the Jordanian army. Within 48 hours of this victory, Fateh received 5000 applications for membership, for the news of the heroic Arab achievement and the relatively high "Israeli" causalities restored some of the Palestinian and Arab self-confidence.

Soon after its establishment, and despite fierce criticism and pressures from the Arab governments, Fateh became the major Palestinian power. In 1969 Fateh, together with other Palestinian movements, joined, and consequently, controlled the Palestinian Liberation Organization (PLO), which was established by the Arab League as a representative body of the Palestinian people, and on 5 February 1969, Yasser Arafat became the president of the PLO. Fateh continued to be the spearhead of Palestinian resistance until the eruption of the first intifada from 1987-1993, when Hamas emerged to share the lead.

Political Positions

Fateh's political vision crystallized in its second conference in 1968, which adopted long term popular resistance, emphasizing military confrontation as the means for the liberation of Palestine, and considered the battle with "Israel" as the major reality for Palestinians today, that should

overshadow all differences. It insisted that liberating Palestine is the pre-requisite of Arab unity and that an independent Palestinian should emerge and lead the battle against Zionism, and Fateh aims to represent this independent will. Fateh's long-term goal is to establish an independent Palestinian secular democratic state, where followers of all religions live in harmony under a common and just rule, whereas "Israel" is an apartheid state that forms the antithesis of this aspired Palestinian secular state. Fateh rejected embracing any ideology, and insisted that its only ideology is a rifle directed against "Israel", a feature that allowed Fateh to accommodate faces representing a wide range of political views, that sometimes contradicted each other. Furthermore, Fateh followed a strategy that was aimed at dragging the Arabs into battle with "Israel" to achieve the liberation of Palestine.

Later on, in 1974, Fateh pushed the PLO to adopt the 10-Point Program which recognized other means besides military struggle to liberate Palestine, and proposed that Palestinians should exercise their right of self-determination on any liberated part of Palestine. The program clearly paved the way for negotiations aiming at a political settlement.

Fateh continued surfing in that direction, and in 1988 the Palestinian National Council (PNC) recognized the Security Council Resolutions on Palestine as valid bases for a negotiated settlement. Despite internal objections, Fateh continued to seek a political settlement until 1993 when the PLO and "Israel" reached the agreement known as the Oslo Accords. During the last intifada of Al-Aqsa, an important segment of Fateh voiced its rejection of the Oslo Accords and established the "Martyrs of Al-Aqsa Brigade" that resumed

armed struggle against "Israel" and was tied to the West Bank's prominent figure, Marwan Al-Barghouthi.

Fateh is a huge movement with monetary, social and political institutions including representation offices around the world. However, many of its institutions were marginalized and utilized to serve the will of its political leadership. Its military wing, *Al-Asifah*, has been idle since the signature of Oslo, a development that led in a way to the emergence of the aforementioned "Martyrs of Al-Aqsa Brigade". According to PLO's official sources, and until the outbreak of the first intifada in 1987, 56% of the martyrs of the armed struggle came from Fateh and around 75% of the prisoners inside Palestine were among its members.

Popular Support and Main Figures

Fateh is arguably the largest Palestinian movement and the one that claims the honor of initiating the Palestinian military struggle against "Israel" on 1 January 1965. It continued to be the firebrand of the Palestinian resistance during the period 1967-1987 and, therefore, holds a huge reserve of popular support, despite the unpopularity of many of its prominent figures, especially after the creation of the Palestinian National Authority (PNA). Besides its late leader Yasser Arafat, the main leaders of Fateh were Kamal Adwan, assassinated in April 1973, Khalil Al-Wazir (Abu Jihad), assassinated in April 1988, Salah Khalaf (Abu Iyad), assassinated in 1991, and the late Faisal Al-Husseini, who died in May 2001. Other prominent figures of Fateh today are Farouq Al-Qaddoumi (Abullutuf), Mahmoud Abbas (Abu Mazen), Nabil Sha`ath, Hossam Khader and Marwan Al-Barghouthi.

(4) Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine (PFLP)

Background and Establishment

The Popular Front is considered, in a way, the Palestinian wing of the Arab Nationalist Movement (a Pan-Arabist movement that was very popular in the 1960s and was established in Beirut in the early 1950s). It was established at the 1966 conference of the Arab Nationalist Movement, which decided to establish a Palestinian wing of the movement and handed it over to George Habash and Maher Al-Yamani. The Front pursued its military activities after the 1967 catastrophic defeat, issuing its first communiqué on 11 December 1967. The Front decided to adopt Leninism in 1968, a development that brought objection inside the front and caused its fragmentation into three main groups: the first was the Popular Front-General Command under Ahmad Jebril, and left the mother Front in October 1968. It rejected the adoption of Leninism, and continues to work independently until today. Second was the Democratic Front for the Liberation of Palestine, under Nayef Hawatmeh who declared its formation in February 1969 and sought more rapid transformation to Marxism. The third was the mother organization, the PFLP that lost much of its support and vitality due to this fragmentation, but continued to be, until the emergence of Hamas in 1987, the second largest Palestinian movement, after Fateh.

Political Positions

The Popular Front sees in "Israel" a military human base for Western Imperialism that aims at blocking the emancipation of the Arabs, and considers armed struggle against "Israel" as a part of the emancipation of the Arab Nation, and of the universal revolution against imperialism and the capitalist recursive regimes at large. It further considers its efforts a part of emancipating the Jewish masses in "Israel" that are controlled by imperialism and Zionism, and its ultimate goal is to create a democratic people's state, in which all citizens, Arabs and Jews, enjoy equal rights.

Since the establishment of the PLO, the Front was skeptical of its ability to represent the Palestinians; nevertheless, it joined the PLO together with other Palestinian movements in 1968, but did not maintain a clear stand towards this issue then withdrew and rejoined the PLO several times. The Front, together with Fateh, was in favor of the 10-Point Program, which recognized other means to liberate Palestine besides armed struggle, but soon after it disputed with Fateh over its interpretation and accused Fateh of using the program as a cover to give up military struggle. The front then joined and led the "Rejection Front" that was formed in October 1974 to oppose any negotiated settlement. In 1979, the PFLP abandoned the Rejection Front and improved its relations with Fateh. In 1993, the front opposed the Oslo Accords and joined the 10-movement coalition, led by Hamas, to politically oppose the accords. In 1996, however, the Front left the coalition and improved its relations with the Palestinian National Authority (PNA), and many of its figures entered the West Bank though they did not participate politically in the PNA.

The Front executed successful military operations inside Palestine from 1968-1973, an era that ended by the assassination of its military leader Mohammad Al-Asmar. The Front also executed controversial plane-hijack operations in 1970-73, and was more active in operations outside Palestinian lands. It actively participated in the first intifada from 1987-1993 and executed few successful operations in the second intifada of Al-Aqsa.

Popular Support and Main Figures

Though weakened by the many fragmentations it witnessed, the PFLP continued to be the second largest Palestinian movement and the main competitor of Fateh until the emergence of Hamas. The Front usually gets 3-5% of votes in students' councils and trade unions elections inside Palestine, and is widely popular among Christian Palestinians. The main figure of the Front is George Habash, who was its secretary-general from 1967-2000, when Abu Ali Mustapha was elected as secretary-general. The latter was assassinated by an "Israeli" Apache in August 2001, and was succeeded by Ahmad Sa`dat who is held in custody, (2002), by the PNA after being accused by "Israel" of planning the assassination of the extremist "Israeli" tourism minister, former General Rehavam Zeevi, who was assassinated by the Front in response to the above mentioned assassination of its secretary-general. Among the Front's notable members was its spokesperson, the famous Palestinian writer Ghassan Kanafani, who was assassinated by Mossad in July 1972 in Beirut.

(5) Hamas

Background and Establishment

Hamas is an Arabic acronym for the Islamic Resistance Movement. It was established at the beginning of the first intifada (1987-1993), issuing its first communiqué on 15 December 1987, one week after the eruption of the intifada. As a military and political wing of a deep-rooted Islamic movement, the Muslim Brotherhood, whose emergence dates back to the 1940s, Hamas, soon after its establishment, climbed the ladder to become the main competitor of the mother Palestinian liberation movement, Fateh.

Hamas owes its establishment to a number of regional and local developments. Regionally the Islamic revival that swept the Arab World during the late 1980s, bringing the popularity of the Islamic movements back to peak. It was accompanied by an important change in the political stand of the Muslim Brothers towards the Palestinian Question, who decided, after decades of controversy on whether the creation of an Islamic state is a pre-requisite of liberation or vice versa, that both are parallel tasks that have to go hand in hand. Locally, the PLO exodus from Lebanon following the 1982 war, which led to marginalization of its military efforts, and the transformation of the confrontation ground to inside the Palestinian territories. Last and most important, was the violent escalation of events that caused the eruption of the first intifada which

prepared the ground for the emergence of resistance movements inside the West Bank and the Gaza Strip.

Political Positions

Hamas adopts a political ideology that "sees in the Hebrew state an antagonistic totalitarian regime…a regime that complements the forces of modern colonialism which aim to take hold of the [Muslim] nation's resources and to prevent the rise of any grouping that works to unify the nation." And considers that "The main confrontations with the Zionist entity is taking place in Palestine where the enemy has established its base and stronghold…[and] no part of Palestine should be compromised" And therefore, "the best way to handle the conflict with the Zionist enemy is to mobilize the potentialities of the Palestinian people in the struggle against the Zionist presence in Palestine and to keep the firebrand burning until the time when the conditions to win the battle have been realized, and wait until all the potentialities and resources of the Arab and Islamic nation are mobilized under a common political will and purpose."

Based on the above, Hamas opposes the Oslo Accords and the subsequential Peace Process, and contend that these agreements "rewarded the aggressors for their aggression", and further imposed security conditions that turned the Palestinian National Authority (PNA) into a legal cover for occupation, the very reason that eventually will lead, in their view, to the futility the accords and the PNA. The movement adopts military resistance as the main means of the struggle against "Israel", and avoids any inter-Palestinian military confrontations. Even when dragged to do so under extreme repressive measures, it adopts peaceful political means in opposing the Oslo Accords and leads a coalition of 10

Palestinian movements for this purpose. Regionally, it maintains a non-interference policy with regard to Arab internal affairs, although it tries to encourage Arab governments not to be involved in any direct relations with "Israel". Hamas also insists that the battlefield with "Israel" is inside historical Palestine and opposes any attempt to extend the confrontation to other areas.

Hamas is an all-rounded organization that has two main wings. The social political wing that establishes schools, hospitals, charities and political and media bureaus, and the military wing, known as `Izzuddin Al-Qassam Brigades, a well-organized wing that survived many crackdowns by "Israel" and the PNA helped by the CIA, and executed most of the "martyrdom operations" since 1993.

Popular Support and Main Figures

The main popular base of Hamas is in the Gaza Strip, though it still enjoys wide-range support in the West Bank and the Palestinian diaspora. It usually gains 40-45% of votes in students' councils and trade unions elections inside Palestine and forms the main competitor of Fateh. The main political figures of Hamas are: the late Sheikh Ahmad Yaseen, the founder and spiritual leader who was imprisoned in 1989 and released in 1997 as a part of a deal arranged by King Hussein of Jordan for returning the "Israeli" Mossad agents after a bungled attempt to assassinate Khaled Mish`al, the Chief of Hamas's Political Bureau, in Jordan. Other political figures inside Palestine are the late Abdulaziz Al-Rantisi, Mahmoud Al-Zahhar and Isma`eel Haniyyeh in Gaza, late Jamal Mansour and Jamal Salim in the West Bank. Besides Khaled Mish`al, Mousa Abu Marzouq, Mohammad Nazzal and Ibrahim Ghousheh are the main political figures

outside Palestine. Military leaders of Hamas are: the Late Salah Shehadeh, the founder of Al-Qassam Brigade, Mohammad Al-Dheif, the master mind behind most of the brigades' operations in the intifada of Al-Aqsa, Yahya Ayyash, the legendary Palestinian fugitive known as "the engineer", Emad Aqel and Muhyi Addin Ashareef.

(6) Islamic Jihad

Background and Establishment

Palestinian Islamic Jihad Movement is the official name of this organization that clearly utilizes the Islamic concept of Jihad, which means struggle for the Cause of Allah (God). The current organization is the heir of three movements that held the same name and worked for the same goal. The first one was established in the West Bank by Ibrahim Serbil and Sheikh As`ad Bayoud Attamimi, and executed its first military operation in 1982; it is virtually non-existent today. The second is Saraya Al-Jihad Al-Islamee (Battalions of Islamic Jihad) that was composed of an experienced group of Fateh professional fighters who fought in southern Lebanon under the then Marxist Student Brigade, and came to embrace Islam as a religion and as a theory of revolution. It was founded by Muhammad Bhies (Abu Hasan Qasem), Muhammad Sultan Al-Tamimi (Hamdi) and its ideas were voiced out by the Palestinian thinker Munir Shafiq in the early 1980s. It declared its first operation, Al-Buraq Wall operation, in October 1986 and ended tragically by the assassination of its two founders by Mossad in Cyprus in February 1988. The third group, which continues to exist and absorbs some members of the above two, was founded in Egypt by some Palestinian students, mainly Fathi Al-Sheqaqi and Abdul Aziz Odeh who were not satisfied in the stand of the Muslim Brotherhood towards the Palestinian Question at that time, to establish the Islamic state then mobilize the

powers of the Muslims to liberate Palestine. They found the former more difficult than liberation itself and criticized the inactive policies that resulted from such strategy. They were further influenced by the success of the Islamic Revolution in Iran which inspired them to launch a project of an Islamic resistance in Palestine, a project that they will work on starting from the early 1980s and until today. The organization is based currently in Damascus, its first secretary general, Dr. Fathi Al-Sheqaqi, was assassinated in October 1995 by Mossad in Malta, and was succeeded by Dr. Ramadan Abdullah Shallah whose academic links in the West has caused some controversy, especially in the U.S. (he has a doctorate from the University of Durham and had left a post at the University of South Florida)

Political Stands

Al-Jihad maintains a stand that adopts active military resistance against "Israel" as the means for liberation. It executes its operations mostly from inside Palestine, though, unlike Hamas, it does not confine the battlefield to historical Palestine, and occasionally cooperates with Hizbullah of Lebanon and Hamas. Al-Jihad sees in "Israel" a spearhead of imperial interests and plans in the area that hinders any project of revival, and therefore the elimination of this alien body is a pre-requisite of any successful revival, and a pre-requisite of the creation of an Islamic state. Al-Jihad does not recognize the right of "Israel" to exist and maintains that no part of Palestine should be compromised. Consequently, it opposes the Oslo Accords and joins Hamas in a coalition. of 10 Palestinian movements that aims at the abandonment of these accords through political means. Al-Jihad avoids inter-Palestinian military confrontations even under the repressive

measures of the Palestinian National Authority (PNA). Al-Jihad is smaller an organization than Hamas and its main activities are military with few social and political institutions, its military wing is known as Saraya Al-Quds (Jerusalem's Battalions).

Popular Support and Main Figures

Al-Jihad is the second largest Islamic movement in Palestine and usually forms a coalition with Hamas in students' councils and trade unions elections, getting 20-30% of the votes gained by this coalition. It was the first Islamic resistance organization to emerge inside Palestine and claims the honor of launching the Islamic struggle, Jihad, inside Palestine in the early 1980s preparing the ground for the eruption of the first intifada from 1987-1993, and still continues to achieve military successes though not as big as Hamas'. The main political figures of Al-Jihad inside Palestine is Abdullah Al-Shami, and outside Palestine is Ramadan Abdullah Shallah, besides, of course, its founder the late Fathi Al-Sheqaqi. Its military figures were Muhammad Bhies (Abu Hasan Qasem) and Muhammad Sultan Attamimi (Hamdi), both assassinated in 1988, and Mahmoud Al-Tawalbeh, who led the gallant military resistance during the invasion of Jenin Camp in April 2002, which led to in his death.

Chapter Seven

Peace Projects

During the long years of the Arab-"Israeli" conflict, many projects where proposed to ease the situation and present a compromise accepted by both sides in order to prevent, and later on stop, the continuous bloodshed.

Before the establishment of "Israel", most projects where proposed by Britain who colonized the area and aimed at preventing violent confrontation between the local Arab population and the Jewish immigrants protected by the British administration. The most important of these projects was the Peel Partition Plan presented after the eruption of the 1936 Palestinian Revolution. After WWII, the Question of Palestine was handed over to the newly-established United Nations, which proposed a disproportionate partition plan that reflected Zionist influence rather than Zionist "rights".

After the establishment of "Israel" in 1948, "Israel" wanted to establish itself as a permanent fact, while the Arabs considered what happened a result of colonial influence that should be removed soon. Thus, both parties were not willing to compromise, and the Reconciliation Committee established by the U.N. came up with nothing. The only insisting issue was then that of the refugees, and therefore the U.N. dealt

with the dispute as an issue of refugees who needed to be resettled, and passed resolutions that affirmed their rights and established bodies for their relief.

After the 1967 war, the Arabs were convinced, by their defeat, that "Israel" is a permanent reality, and that they are the weaker side in the equation. "Israel", on the other hand, became convinced of its incomparable superiority that qualified it, from now on, to dedicate the conditions of any political settlement. From 1967 and until the signature of Oslo Accords in 1993, more than 14 peace projects were proposed. The first of which was the Alon plan, proposed by the "Israeli" foreign minister, Yigal Alon, that became the blueprint of the "Israeli" negotiating position, although it was not officially endorsed by the "Israeli" government. The first project to be approved by the Arabs was Rogers project of direct negotiations between Egypt and "Israel". It was then followed by the project of the United Arab Kingdom, of King Hussein of Jordan, that proposed the inclusion of any liberated Palestinian territory with Jordan in one state. The 1973 war restored some of the lost balance of power in the area and boosted the Arabs' bargaining position allowing the Egyptian President, Sadat, to conclude the Camp David Accords with "Israel", marking the first Arab "Israeli" peace treaty to be signed. This era ended with the Madrid Conference that resulted in direct negotiations between the Arabs and "Israel", and indirectly resulted in the signature of Oslo Accords that initiated the Middle East Peace Process.

Oslo agreement was a result of secret direct negotiations between the PLO and "Israel", in which both parties agreed to recognize each others as peace partners, and to negotiate the disputed issues based on the U.N. resolutions, aiming at a final

settlement within five years of the signature of the initial agreement. During this transitional period, "Israel" would gradually withdraw from the West Bank and Gaza Strip, and the Palestinians would establish a National Authority (PNA) over these territories. In the initial trust-building stage, "Israel" handed the Palestinians partial control over Gaza Strip and Jericho City in the West Bank, the agreed-upon elections were held in the West Bank and Gaza and Yaser Arafat became the chairman of the PNA. Several agreements were signed later on to increase the areas given to the Palestinians and specify the security missions that the PNA had to carry on in order to protect "Israel" from Palestinian military acts.

The Oslo agreement further paved the way for other Arab brothers to settle their disputes with "Israel", as the main concerned party, the Palestinians, are doing so. Jordan signed Wadi Araba Treaty with "Israel" in October 1994, and few other Arab governments normalized relations with "Israel" and exchanged diplomatic commissions.

Negotiations prolonged, however, and the five-year interval passed without making any breakthrough in the main disputed issues. In July 2000, both parties came together in a two-week negotiations round in Camp David, to negotiate the postponed issues, aiming at a final settlement. The talks, which were facilitated by the American President Bill Clinton, ended with a failure, especially over the issues of Al-Quds (Jerusalem) and Al-Aqsa Mosque. The political situation in the area was heated, and a violent confrontation became imminent. The Intifada of Al-Aqsa erupted in September 2000, triggered by the provocative visit of extremist "Israeli" leader Ariel Sharon to Al-Aqsa Mosque protected by 2000 soldiers.

Peace Projects before 1948

Peace projects before 1948 (i.e. before the establishment of Israel) were basically concerned with the prevention of war or any military confrontation between the enthusiastic and ambitious Jewish immigrants and the local indigenous Palestinian Arabs. The Jewish immigrants were convinced of their indispensable and sole right to the land, while the Arabs, who had initially welcomed the Jews as neighbors, soon realized (in the early twenties), the vast Zionist ambitions that in effect meant the denial of their rights and their deportation from their lands. Palestinian military resistance to end the British colonization of Palestine had intensified because of the British support to Zionist plans.

During the period 1917-1948 Palestine was under the British mandate, thus most of the peace proposals were initiated by the British administration especially following revolutions and instabilities, the most important of which was the 1936 Revolution that was followed by the Peel Report.

Peel Partition Plan 1937

Following the outburst of the Great Palestinian Revolt in 1936, the British government sent a royal committee to examine and report on the situation in Palestine. The committee supported the just demands of both the Palestinians and Jews govern themselves and acknowledged

their ability to do so. The committee had, however, realized that the "dual obligations" given by the British to both Arabs and Jews were not reconcilable, namely the promise to the former to establish an independent national state in Palestine contradicted the pledge to the latter to establish their own homeland in the very same territory. One promise cannot thus be maintained without breaking the other. Hence the committee viewed the British existence as harmful to both parties and inconsistent with its mandatory obligation power to help the local people to develop and become able of independently governing themselves. Consequently it recommended the partition of Palestine into a Jewish State over northern and coastal areas, and a Palestinian counterpart state to be united with Transjordan under one government, while few Palestinian cities, namely Jerusalem (Al-Quds), Bethlehem (Beit Lahm), Nazareth (Al-Nasirah) and Jaffa (Yaffa) had to remain under the British mandate.

This was the first suggestion to divide Palestine into two states; by which the British wanted to escape from the mess that they created by their dual promises at the expense of the local people. Both Palestinians and Jews had, however, rejected the proposal:

McDonald's White Paper of 1939

Subduing the Palestinian revolution had cost the British dearly at time when they needed to concentrate all their power and resources to face the challenge of WWII. While chasing the revolutionaries to the countryside, Britain soon realized the necessity of a political change; the McDonald's White Paper, so called after Malcom McDonald, the minister of colonies, was thus issued in 1939. By that time, there was a growing trend in the British government that Palestine can

take no more Jewish immigrants, and that Britain has already fulfilled the Balfour Declaration of 1917 to establish a Jewish homeland in Palestine. The British declared the following in this paper:

1- No intention whatsoever to create a Jewish state.
2- It Rejected Arab demands that Palestine should be an exclusively independent state.
3- Instead, it envisaged the termination of the mandate by 1949, that would be followed by an independent state in Palestine with a shared Palestinian-Jewish government.
4- Jewish immigration to Palestine would end after allowing another 75,000 immigrants over a period of five years, unless the Palestinians give their consent.
5- British government would strictly regulate the transfer of land to the Jews.

The paper was skeptically received by the Palestinian leaders who had seriously mistrusted British intentions, especially as it did not grant amnesty for the revolutionaries and linked the establishment of the proposed state to Jewish approval and cooperation. Despite all these drawbacks, this British paper was a political victory for the Palestinians.

On the other hand, the Zionists outrageously rejected the plan and tried by various means, including military ones, to push the British government to abandon it. Nonetheless, the Zionists supported British war effort during WWII, in the hope that the situation will change after the war.

The U.N. Partitioning Plan presented in resolution 181 of 1947

The Zionists had well exploited the post World War situation, particularly the international sympathy for the plight of the Jews in Nazi Germany, and exploited the miserable conditions of Jews of Western Europe to boost their numbers in Palestine through massive immigration. By then, the Zionists shifted their focus to the U.S., they influenced both the Republican and the Democratic parties and gained much attention from President Truman. Under American pressure, Bevin, the British Foreign Minister declared that the official abandonment of the White Paper, and handed over the issue of Palestine to the newly established United Nations.

The U.N. met in its first emergency session in 2 April 1947 to discuss the issue. After lengthy discussions, it decided to form a special committee, the United Nations Special Committee of Palestine (UNSCOP), to further clarify the issue. Member countries of this committee were: Australia, Canada, Czechoslovakia, Guatemala, Holland, India, Iran, Peru, Sweden, Uruguay, and Yugoslavia. The committee held several meetings and concluded discussions with all concerned parties. Its final report admitted that the Arabs owned 86% of Palestine (trusted historical sources say that they owned 93.5%), and are therefore looking for their right in full independence.

The committee came up with two main projects:

The first project, supported by majority of members proposed that:

1- Palestine should be divided into two states, Arab and Jewish, with an economic union.

2- Arab State should be established over 42.88% of Palestine, inhabited by 725 thousand Arabs and 10 thousand Jews.

3- Jewish State should be established over 56.74% of Palestine, inhabited by 498 thousand Jews and 497 Arabs (Note the demographic superiority of the Arabs in the total and even in the would-be Jewish State).

4- Jerusalem (Al-Quds) will be a *corpus separatum* under an international regime to be administered by the United Nations.

The second project, supported only by Iran, India and Yugoslavia, proposed the establishment of a Palestinian Federal State with Jerusalem (Al-Quds) as its Capital, and two federal governments, Jewish and Arab.

Another later proposal considered the matter an international border dispute that should be handed over to the International Court of Justice for arbitration. The proposal was rejected by 25 votes against, 18 for and 11 abstentions, and a contrary motion, that stipulated the eligibility of the U.N. to make *recommendations* on the matter, passed by 21 votes for 20 against (note the narrow majority).

In 25 November 1947 the first project was presented to the General Assembly for a decision. It embodied minor alterations giving Jaffa (Yaffa) and a part of Negev desert (Naqab) to the Arab state, thus bringing the ratio to 54.7% for the Jewish State, 44.8% for the Arab State and 0.5% for International Administration in Jerusalem (Al-Quds). The motion needed two third of the votes to be passed, but such a majority was not possible in the first round and a second vote was about to be held on the 26th had it been postponed by the

President, the Brazilian Ambassador. The U.S., the World Zionist Organization and the Jewish Agency launched an aggressive campaign to secure the needed majority. Valuable presents were sent to wives of Latin American presidents, The U.S. promised Haiti financial aid if they supported the decision, American businessmen interfered with Guatemala to change its stand, Firestone Corporation used its influence on Liberia and the Philippines was subjected to unbearable American political pressure. All these countries changed their stands; the two third majority was secured, and the motion was passed on 29 November 1947 with 33 votes for 13 against and 10 abstentions (Britain was one of them!). Just like that, the fate of the holy land and its people was determined!

This decision was clearly unlawful and it exhibited the double standard of the U.N. since its early days. The U.N. had furthermore, contradicted its own charter by interfering to determine peoples' fate, and it did not have authority to impose arbitration, which should have been a mere recommendation.

The Arabs rejected the partition plan for obvious reason, while the Zionists voiced their acceptance though they did not have the intention to abide by it, as demonstrated in their practices during the 1948 War. They expelled the Arab population who supposedly should be in the proposed Jewish State, and occupied more land than had been assigned to them, 77%. Zionists did not accept the resolution out of "good intentions" and "belief in peace"; rather, they saw it as means that takes them to Palestine but not an end in itself. Indeed, there was a trend within the Zionist organization proposing that felt the Jewish State may be established without war, and

through economic compensation for individual Palestinians that would persuade them to voluntarily leave the land for the "poor" landless Jews, and settle in other Arab areas. This trend was particularly strong in the twenties and the early thirties, but Zionists soon found that Palestinians were more attached to the land than Jews themselves. Besides, the population growth rate among the Palestinians was among the highest in the world, which meant that the Jews, even after Jewish immigration to Palestine, would not constitute a majority even in their would be state. The only option for the Zionists was thus to forcefully expel the Palestinians, otherwise they will continue to increase and no immigration, no matter how massive it may be, could counter this growth. All the Zionists were then convinced that war was inevitable to establish the Zionist State.

Peace Projects From 1948 until 1967
(From the Establishment of "Israel" Until the third Arab-Israeli war)

After its establishment in 1948, "Israel" made it clear to everybody that it was there to remain, and that nobody could drive the "Israelis" to the sea as repeatedly claimed by the Arab rhetoric in the early fifties. "Israel's" response to all proposals was determined by its firm stand that it was not the weak part who makes concessions. Arabs, on the other hand, believed that the catastrophe was squarely the responsibility of the puppet governments sustained by foreign colonial powers; and that the new revolutionary spirit that swept the Arab World would surely defeat "Israel" and vanquish forever. Based on this hypothesis, the Arabs conceived themselves as the stronger side of the equation and therefore refused to negotiate. Meanwhile, "Israel" was not ready to budge, and a common understanding through negotiations was virtually impossible.

By 1952, the U.N. dropped the "Question of Palestine" from its agenda, and the issue became a mere refugee problem. The intransigence of both parties made negotiations about lands and borders impossible, and the only persistent and urgent problem that needed immediate attention was that of the refugees, who lived in terrible conditions and formed a burden for the host countries.

U.N. resolution 194 on Palestinian Refugees (11 December 1948)

This resolution was the first international document issued after the establishment of "Israel", inter alia it stipulated that "the refugees wishing to return to their homes and live at peace with their neighbors should be permitted to do so at the earliest practicable date, and that compensation should be paid for the property of those choosing not to return, and for loss of or damage to property which, under principles of international law or in equity, should be made good by the Governments or authorities responsible". The resolution established a reconciliation committee, consisting of France, Turkey and the U.S., that would seek through negotiations to ease the situation and establish permanent peace in the Middle East. It also resolved that the holy places should remain, untouched and their identity be strictly maintained.

This resolution had thus imposed the Palestinian right of return on the occupying power, who should treat them as citizens with full rights and obligations.

This resolution on the right of return was reaffirmed almost 110 times until 2001; but the refugees are still out there! 800 thousand out of 920 thousands Palestinians living in the territories occupied in 1948 were made refugees, who amounted to 5,000,000 people in 2002.

Palestinians could not establish their independent state, as the West Bank was annexed to Jordan in 1950, and the Gaza Strip was placed under Egyptian administration.

The conciliation committee, in its effort to reach a compromise, proposed the return of 100 thousand refugees

only in return for peace, but "Israel" rejected the proposition outright.

The Arab countries had initially cooperated with the committee in the hope of forcing "Israel" to comply with U.N. resolutions, but they were eventually shocked by the Anglo-American-French declaration in May 1950 to maintain and respect the de facto "Israeli" borders; by which "Israel" would in effect be occupying 23% of the would be Palestinian State in resolution 181. Hence Arabs stopped cooperation with the committee.

When "Israel" applying to join the U.N., "Israel" was forced to sign Lausanne Protocol with its Arab neighbors that provided for the following:

1- The map attached to the U.N. resolution 181 should be the bases on which the future of Palestine should be determined.

2- "Israel" should retreat to these borders.

3- Jerusalem (Al-Quds) will become an internationally administrated area.

4- The return of the refugees and their right to regain their properties, and compensation should be paid to those who choose not to return.

But once it joined the U.N. "Israel" refused to abide by this treaty and no body had even tried to force her to do so.

The reconciliation committee failed to make any progress of any kind, but kept on submitting reports of its failure to the U.N.; including arranging the return of the refugees.

With the same spirit to regard the Palestinian problem as a refugees' problem, the U.N. issued in December 1949

resolution 302 that established a body for the relief of the refugees, UNRWA (United Nations Relief and Work Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East). This resolution, proposed by Britain, aimed at financially helping the Palestinians to establish themselves in the host countries. It now became clear that the intention of the great powers was to settle the refugees in the countries to which they escaped. Once they are absorbed there, the problem of Palestine was expected to be solved easily.

List of Projects

For the sake of historical documentation, here is a list of the most important proposals put forward on the issue:

1- Norwegian Project on November 1952 that called for stopping hostile acts and starting direct negotiations between "Israel" and the Arabs.

2- Gama Project, Proposed by the U.S. in 1955-1956, that tried to convene the Egyptian President Nasser together with the "Israeli" Prime Minister, David Bin Gurion, in direct secret negotiations on a yacht in the Mediterranean. But this failed due to the refusal of Bin Gurion to give his prior acceptance of the project as demanded by Nasser.

3- Johnston Project of May 1955 that proposed settling the refugees problem and the whole conflict through the establishment of common agricultural investments in the Jordan River area that would enhance production in the area and thus gives room for the refugees and further Jewish immigrants. It was rejected by both sides.

4- Dallas Project of August 1955 which was proposed by the U.S. It called for return of "as many as possible" refugees to their lands, and settling the rest in the areas to which they migrated. It called upon both sides to take measures to prevent any new war in the area.

5- UNRWA proposed a project that would settle the refugees of Gaza in northwest Sinai. The Egyptian government cooperated with this effort, and a detailed plan was made for transferring refugees from the crowded Gaza Strip to newly built settlements in Sinai. The project faced strong Palestinian opposition, and demonstrations started calling for the formation of a Palestinian Liberation Army.

6- In November 1955, the British Prime Minister, Antony Eden, proposed negotiations to reach a compromise between the Arabic position that called "Israel" to abide by the borders in resolution 181 borders, and the "Israeli" insistence on truce line borders. The project was finally rejected by "Israel".

7- In June 1959, the U.N. Secretary General Hummurshold proposed solving the refugees' problem by helping the countries that host them financially, without forsaking the refugees' right of return. But the Palestinians rejected this project and opposed any other plan that calls for their absorption economically.

8- In October 1962, Joseph Johnson, the director of Karinji Institute for World Peace, who was appointed by the U.S. to present a peace initiative, proposed a mechanism that gave the refugees the free choice of going back to their land or to accept compensations.

9- The only Arab Peace initiative of that time came in April 1965 from Alhabeeb Borqeibah, the Tunisian president, who proposed that "Israel" should return one third of the area occupied in 1948 for the establishment of a Palestinian State that would house the refugees. In return, The Arabs will end the status of war and normalize relations with "Israel". "Israel" welcomed the proposal which it viewed as reflecting a new trend in the Arabic thinking, but rejected the part on returning back occupied lands. But the project was rejected officially and publicly by the Arabs who considered it as a betrayal of the Arab cause; Bourqeibah was subjected to severe criticism and pressure.

10- Finally, the "Israeli" Prime Minister, Levi Eshkol responded in May 1965 with another peace project that made only minor modifications on the existing borders in return for direct negotiations and normalization of relations with the Arabs, but the Arabs rejected the project.

Peace Projects from 1967 until Oslo 1993

(From the Third Arab-Israeli war until the beginning of Middle East Peace Process in 1993)

The 1967 marked a significant change in the stand of both parties. "Israel" became arrogantly convinced of its incomparable military superiority, while Arab governments came to the conclusion that "Israel" is a reality that is there to exist. By then, "Israel" was the one who dictated its conditions in any settlement and Arab demands drastically changed, their position for the return of all or some parts, of the lands occupied in 1948, to that of those lost in 1967; i.e. all what the Arab officials asked for was to "remove the consequences of the 1967 "Israeli" aggression". This shift in demands was a major catastrophe for the Palestinian cause; as the "Israeli" acquisition in 1948 of 77% of the Palestinian lands in 1948 became irrelevant, in fact out of the question.

Although the Arab Summit in Khartoum in August 1967 came up with the rejective trend that swept the Arab World of "No reconciliation, no negotiations and no surrender", the above position governs the Arabs' attitude towards "Israel" to this day. Consequently many peace proposals came up during this period; and military confrontation with "Israel" has been practically ruled out, though theoretically it was still there. The discussion below tries to introduce the main projects that were proposed during this period (1967-1993):

1- The Alon Plan: Yigal Alon was the "Israeli" foreign minister during the war of the 1967. One month after the war, he proposed that: "Israeli" eastern borders should include the Jordan River and half of the Dead Sea. Thus the Rift Valley "Al-Ghour" should be annexed to "Israel" and agricultural settlements should soon be established there and in Eastern Jerusalem (Al-Quds). "Israel" should avoid by all possible means the inclusion of any new Arab population in its territory, and the Palestinians should have a form of autonomy, under Jordanian administration, over the areas not annexed to "Israel"; Gaza should become part of "Israel" with its indigenous population only, the remaining refugee population should be settled in West Bank or northern Sinai. Refugees' problem shall be solved through regional cooperation and with international support; "Israel" will help by establishing model settlements for the refugees in the West Bank.

Alon Project became widely known, though it was not officially proposed or even discussed in the "Israeli" cabinet. Nonetheless, until today, this project shapes the "Israeli" approach to peace, and forms the basic framework for all "Israeli" peace projects.

2- Security Council Resolution 242 of 1967: On 22 November, the Security Council passed resolution 242 (1967) to provide a framework for peace in the Middle East. It emphasized "the inadmissibility of the acquisition of territory by war" and affirmed that "a just and lasting peace in the Middle East" should be based on the following principles: "(i) Withdrawal of Israeli armed forces from *territories* occupied in the recent conflict; (ii) Termination of all claims or states of belligerency, and respect for, and acknowledgment of, the

sovereignty, territorial integrity and political independence of every state in the area, and their right to live in peace within secured and recognized boundaries free from any threats or acts of force." The resolution also affirmed the necessity of "achieving a just settlement of the refugee problem".

The resolution is indeed controversial for many reasons. It did not specify the territories from which "Israel" should withdraw nor dealt with the main problem, that is the Palestinian question; it only dealt with the consequences of the 1967 war and the refugees' issue. The resolution had also implicitly accepted the de facto borders that existed before the war as legitimate, although this contradicted resolution 181 and this resolution itself because these territories were acquired by war. Besides, the resolution had clearly played with words as the English text intentionally dropped the word *the* as follows: instead of saying: "...from *THE* territories occupied in the recent conflict" which means *all* territories occupied in 1967, it just said: "...from *territories* occupied in the recent conflict" which does not necessarily mean all of them. The French and the Spanish texts, however, included the definite article and they clearly indicate that "Israel" should withdraw from all the occupied lands! Of course, both "Israel" and the U.S. adhered to the English text, while the U.N. officials never accounted for this clear manipulation of the language.

3- Roger's Project of 1970: In June 1970, U.S. Secretary of State William Rogers proposed a peace plan, which essentially called for a cease-fire and provided a mechanism for the implementation of Security Council Resolution 242. The initiative involved negotiations by the representatives of the parties concerned under the patronage of the Swedish

Ambassador and the U.N. special envoy to the Middle East, Gunnar Jarring. The United Arab Republic (Egypt), Jordan accepted the plan. while "Israel's" reaction was at first rejection but later accepted it under American pressure. The Jordanian offensive in 1970 against the Palestinian resistance forces and the death of the Egyptian President Nasser in the same year threw the project in the garbage.

4- The "United Arab Kingdom" Project of 1972: In a statement on 15 March 1972, King Hussein of Jordan proposed a "United Arab Kingdom" project that was composed of the following: First Palestinian territories, all or the liberated parts, and the Jordanian territories will be united in a federal union governed by the King and his federal government. Secondly a legislative body, Parliament, will be formed with equal number of representatives from both sides as well as a united army under the command of the king as its chief commander. The project was a reflection of the ongoing conflict between the Jordanian Government and the Palestinian Liberation Organization (PLO) over many issues including the right of representing the Palestinian people. It, however, failed as "Israel" was not willing to withdraw from any occupied land, and the PLO refused even to consider it.

5- Security Council Resolution 338 of 1973: Following the 1973 war, that was launched by Egypt and Syria against "Israel", the U.N. Security Council passed resolution 338 that called for an immediate cease-fire and the implementation of resolution 242, that called for negotiations between the parties concerned under appropriate auspices, to establish a just and durable peace in the Middle East. Consequently, a peace conference was held in Geneva in December 1973, in which Egypt and Jordan participated, while "Israel" and Syria

rejected the idea. The only result of the conference was the formation of a Military Committee to arrange a truce between Egyptian and "Israeli" forces in Sinai

6- 10 Points Program of the **PLO**: At its 12th session in Cairo during 1-8 June 1974, the Palestinian National Council (PNC) adopted a new political program, known as the "10 Point Program", that called for the establishment of a Palestinian Authority on any liberated part of Palestine. The program marked a shift in the PLO strategy as it endorsed a gradual liberation approach; accepted a form of autonomy on any "liberated" part, and adopted other than military means to achieve the Palestinian national goals. Several Palestinian factions inside the PLO rejected the program, and formed the so-called "Rejection Front".

7- Camp David Accords Between Egypt and "Israel" in 1978: In September 1978, U.S. President Carter hosted a summit between The Egyptian President Anwar Al-Sadat and the "Israeli" Prime Minister Menachim Begin at Camp David. The two sides concluded the Camp David Accords, which consisted of the two accords: "Framework for Peace in the Middle East" and the "Framework of a Peace Treaty between Egypt and Israel." Letters of understanding were also exchanged between the two parties on the status of Jerusalem (Al-Quds), Sinai settlements, and the implementation of a comprehensive settlement. The first accord (Framework for Peace in the Middle East) provided for the formation of an elected Palestinian self-governing authority in the West Bank and Gaza, for a transitional period not exceeding 5 years to replace the "Israeli" military government However, this government should include "agreed upon personalities"; i.e. not to be under PLO. It further states that Egypt and Jordan

will participate in the negotiations and that their delegations may include Palestinians from the West Bank and Gaza, or other Palestinians as mutually agreed. Three years later, at the latest, negotiations will be concluded on the basis of Security Council resolution 242 (1967), to determine the final status of the West Bank and Gaza.

Camp David Accords, the first officially-signed Arab-"Israeli" peace treaty, formed the basis for the settlement of the West Bank, the Gaza Strip and the refugees' problem in all subsequent negotiations that ultimately led to the Oslo agreement.

At that time, this treaty was considered a form of "betrayal" to the Arab and Palestinian cause, as officially stated by the PLO itself. Sadat's Egypt was dismissed as a "satellite of imperialism", Egypt was boycotted by the Arab League which moved its headquarters from Egypt to Tunisia, and President Sadat himself was assassinated by a militant Islamist group in October 1981. 15 years later, the same PLO signed a treaty with "Israel" that was similar to Camp David, if not less advantageous to the Palestinians, and criticized its opponents for being "narrow-minded", "unrealistic" and "ignorant". It also subjected this opposition to severe oppression with the help of the U.S. and "Israel".

8- Reagan Initiative of 1982: In a statement on 22 September 1982, U.S. president Ronald Reagan proposed, as outlined in the Camp David Accords, the establishment of a democratic self-governing Palestinian authority within 5 years, and the stoppage of "Israeli" settlements in West Bank and Gaza Strip. With regard to the Final Status, the initiative promoted the idea of a Palestinian self-government in association with Jordan, and affirmed that the UN Security

Council resolution 242 (1967) should be applied in all fronts, including the West Bank and Gaza. The initiative proposed that Jerusalem (Al-Quds) should remain undivided, but its final status should be decided through negotiations. "Israel" fiercely rejected Reagan's initiative that was subsequently rejected by the PLO as well. The initiative seemed to have been an attempt to take advantage of the 1982 "Israeli" massive offensive on the military and civilian Palestinian bases in Lebanon that forced the PLO to leave Lebanon, under a brokered U.N. agreement, in order to protect the lives of the civilians.

9- The Arab Plan for Peace of Fez 1982: On 9 September 1982, the Arab Summit in Fez adopted this plan, which had been, with some slight changes, initiated by the then Prince Fahad of Saudi Arabia (King one year later) on 7 August 1981. It called for the establishment of a Palestinian state with Al-Quds (Jerusalem) as its capital and called the U.N. Security Council to guarantee peace for all the states of the region.

10- Brezhenev Initiative of 1982: On 15 September 1982, President Brezhenev of the Soviet Union proposed another peace initiative. He proposed an international conference, under the auspices of the United Nations, and in which the 5 permanent members of the Security Council as well as and all parties concerned would be represented, to provide the framework and which calls for the establishment of a Palestinian state.

11- Jordan-Palestine Confederation Project 1984-85: In his opening speech to the Palestinian National Council (PNC) that convened for its 17th session in Amman, King Hussein of Jordan proposed a peace outline, based on the U.N. resolution

242, that would lead to a Confederation between Jordan and the would be Palestinian State. This was tentatively endorsed and a joint negotiation delegation was formed, which reflected the improvement in the Jordanian-Palestinian relations and a growing tendency to accept the American demands for a peace conference. However, this project was abandoned due to strong objection from some factions in the PLO.

12- PLO Peace Program of 1988: The Intifada of 1987 boasted the reputation of the PLO that had been isolated thousands of miles away from home and consequently unable to wage any meaningful resistance against "Israel". The PLO had, indeed, been practically weak and thus showed increasing inclination to accept the U.S. demand for a negotiated peace settlement. It toned down its previous military stand in favor of a new political program that was adopted by the Palestinian National Council (PNC) in its 19th session convened in Algiers in November 1988. This program included recognition of all U.N. resolutions, which had been a political taboo for a long time, and accepted negotiations as a mean to achieve Palestinian national goals, and admitted "Israel's" right to exist. "Israel" should in return withdraw from all the lands it occupied in 1967, that shall house the new Palestinian state, and dissemble its settlements there, including those in Eastern Al-Quds (Jerusalem), which will become the capital of Palestine.

Subsequently, the Palestinian state was proclaimed-though without territory- and it was soon recognized by 120 nations soon after. But this proclamation was viewed as rhetoric to popularize this program among the Palestinians. Arafat accepted the U.S. as a peace patron; condemned "terrorism"

using the same phraseology dictated by the U.S., and admitted "Israel's" right to exist.

13- Shamir's Autonomy Proposal of 1989: The aforementioned shift in the PLO position aggravated the Intifada that revealed the real face of "Israel" and narrated to the world a story of a people under cruel occupation administered by the right-wing "Israeli" government headed by Prime Minister Yitzhak Shamir. Forced with great political embarrassment, and to turn the tables on the Palestinians, the "Israeli" Prime minister proposed a peace initiative similar to what Camp David proposed regarding West Bank and Gaza Strip. He called for election in Gaza and West Bank excluding Eastern Jerusalem, to choose Palestinian representatives with whom he would negotiate; but did not accept direct negotiations with the PLO which was dismissed in the "Israeli" view as a terrorist organization.

14- Madrid Peace Conference 1991: On 30 October 1991, the Middle East Peace Conference convened in Madrid under the chairmanship of Presidents Bush and Gorbachev. The PLO did not participate directly but was represented by a Palestinian delegation it selected from the West Bank and Gaza. The Arab states were represented at the level of Foreign Ministers, while the "Israeli" delegation was headed by Prime Minister Shamir and the Palestinian Delegation by Dr. Haidar Abdul Shafi.

The negotiations proceeded in two parallel directions: bilateral route in which every country negotiated its problems with "Israel" separately, and a multilateral route that aimed at providing general sponsorship for the peace process in the presence of international participants.

Following the conference, many committees were formed to solve each of the disputed issues, "Israel" tried to manipulate these committees by advancing those that served its purposes, especially the ones on normalization of relations and establishing economic relations between the two sides, while those important to the Palestinians, especially the committee for the refugees, remained idle. Arab countries stopped cooperation with those committees after discovering the "Israeli" manipulative intentions.

While indirect negotiations were going on, secret direct negotiations were synonymously conducted between the PLO and "Israel", facilitated by the Norwegian government. The latter resulted in the Oslo agreement and what came to be known as the "Middle East Peace Process".

Peace Projects and Agreements After Oslo 1993
(The Middle East Peace Process)

Although the Intifada of 1987 was a remarkable Palestinian achievement, the international and regional situation was not in its favor. The Palestinian leadership was, moreover, isolated far away from home, the Arabs were divided more than ever following the Second Gulf War of 1991, the Soviet Union had been disintegrating and a unipolar new world order was in the making leaving practically no room for Third World countries to maneuver and play the superpowers' against each other as before. Since the beginning of the Intifada, and even before that, the PLO was moving towards the negotiations option that was bound to lead to concessions at the expense of the Palestinian rights. The ultimate outcome of all this was Oslo agreement of 1993.

1. Oslo Agreement of 1993: Madrid Peace Conference initiated open rounds of bilateral talks, that seemed to be going into a deadlock, hence both Palestinians and "Israelis" were exploring possibilities and channels. The Norwegian activist Terje Larson, the chairman of a Norwegian research institute concerned with the plight of the Palestinians under occupation, suggested to Yossi Beilin, an "Israeli" politician close to Shimon Peres and a leftist who supported peaceful coexistence with the Palestinians, secret negotiations with the PLO in Oslo, Norway. This proposal attracted the attention of

Beilin, and the arrangements for these negotiations were soon made.

Terje Larson had good contacts with the PLO as well, and an informal meeting was first arranged, between Yaer Hershfield an "Israeli" Professor from Haifa University, and Ahmad Qrie (Abu Al-Alaa', currently the President of the Palestinian Legislative Council). A Common ground was entertained and a series of meetings between the two parties followed during the period between February and September 1993. Both sides increased their representation gradually; "Israel" sent first the under-secretary of its Foreign Ministry, Uri Savir, to be followed by the Foreign Minister himself, Shimon Peres.

While the official negotiations channel of the Madrid conference, led by Dr. Haidar Abdel Shafi, was suspended due to the "Israeli" deportation of 415 Palestinian civilians from the occupied Palestinian territory to south Lebanon, the secret negotiations led by Ahmad Qrie made continuous progress. Suddenly, without even informing the official Palestinian delegation, the PLO declared the conclusion of an agreement with "Israel" that was embodied in the "the Declaration of Principles on Interim Self-Government Arrangements". It was signed in Washington on 13 September 1993 by Mahmoud Abbas, the Palestinian Secretary General of Fateh and Shimon Peres. This agreement became known as "Oslo agreement" because it was arranged and reached in the Norwegian Capital, Oslo.

The agreement formed an important turning point in the history of the Palestinian Question because it was the first agreement ever to be negotiated and signed directly between both sides. Its prime aim was peaceful co-existence between

former enemies who had for the first time recognized each other's "rights", although these rights were not spelled out at that stage. At the same time, the agreement indicated that the Palestinian issue became the private affair of the Palestinians and not the central issue for the Arab and Muslim worlds, as it has been before. Since the Palestinians had then settled "their" problem with "Israel", Arab countries were now free to reach peaceful agreements that would normalize their relations with "Israel". Soon after, on 26 October 1994, Jordan signed the Treaty of Wadi Araba with "Israel", and started the process of normalization of relations.

Other Arab countries followed soon and "Israeli" diplomatic commissions mushroomed throughout the Arab and Muslim worlds.

The main points of Oslo Agreement were:

1- The Palestinians will establish an Interim Self-Government for five years in Gaza and West Bank.

2- Starting from the third year of this Interim Self-Government, negotiations over the final status should start between the two sides based on the U.N. Resolutions 242 and 338.

3- Within two months of this date, both sides should reach an agreement on transferring authority over Gaza and Jericho to the Palestinian side.

4- After nine months of establishing the Self-Government, an elected Palestinian representative council should be formed, and "Israeli" troops should withdraw from the areas inhabited by Palestinian population.

5- An interim Palestinian authority should then be established. but its jurisdiction would NOT include foreign relations, external security, "Israeli" settlements citizens in the area and Jerusalem (Al-Quds).

6- "Israel" reserves the right to veto any Palestinian legislation issued during the interim rule.

7- Any disputed matter that could not be settled through negotiations should be referred to an agreed means of reconciliation.

8- The Palestinian interim rule should expand, gradually, to include other areas in the West Bank that would be determined through future negotiations.

9- The agreement stressed that the PLO should abandon and condemn "terrorism", and work seriously to maintain the security of "Israel" including the stoppage of all kinds of operations against it.

The agreement. however, did not include an explicit "Israeli" commitment to recognize the Palestinian rights to the land or their right to establish their own independent state. The agreement emphasized the "Israeli" right to exist and be secured, while it was vague or silent on the rights of the Palestinian side. It discussed mainly the procedures to establish interim rule without well-defined and clear future steps.

Oslo agreement had in fact left the main issues unresolved; and did not give the Palestinians any substantive gains. At the end of the day, they got what was proposed fifteen years before in Camp David Accords, with even more "Israeli" settlements and less authority. The only real difference was

that in Camp David "Israel" demanded that the Palestinian Authority should not be headed by figures from the PLO while in Oslo they accepted the PLO to be in charge.

Adding to all these drawbacks, many points in the agreement were vague and may carry more than one interpretation, leaving room for "Israel" to maneuver, and impose measures as economic sieges and restrictions of the movement of the Palestinians through the eight years of negotiations (1993-2000).

Although international observers continue to urge both sides to go back to the negotiations table, many people consider the Intifada of Al-Aqsa of 2000 as a declaration of death for Oslo and the peace process based on it.

2. Cairo Agreement (May 1994): As Oslo Agreement was largely vague, most of the subsequent agreements were just explanatory and procedural agreements on how to execute it best. The Cairo Agreement was the first of this chain of agreements. Since the agreed-upon time for "Israeli" withdrawal from Gaza and Jericho passed without the departure of a single "Israelis" soldier, a meeting was held between both sides to deal with this crisis in which "Israeli" stubbornness was met by Palestinian concessions. The agreement, known also as Oslo, was finally concluded in Cairo on 4 May 1994, by which Palestinian Police forces entered Gaza and Jericho, and the Palestinian National Authority was formed. Yaser Arafat returned to Palestine on 1 July 1994.

3. Erez Agreement (August 1994): After the establishment of the Palestinian National Authority, the transfer of power from the "Israeli" military administration to its Palestinian counterparts started, and a detailed agreement

was needed on this "Preparatory Transfer of Powers"; the agreement was concluded at Erez checkpoint, the northern entrance of Gaza Strip. It discussed in details the powers to be transferred to the Palestinian side and its future implications. Since both sides did not trust each other, many restrictions were imposed on the Palestinian side, including its authority and jurisdiction. Until this point, the "Israelis" had demanded that Palestinian police forces should be limited in number and should not wear a uniform nor be allowed to carry arms.

4. Taba Agreement, Oslo 2, (September 1995): According to Oslo agreement of 1993, the second phase of Interim Self-Government should start six months later. However, negotiations over this phase continued for one and a half years, as "Israel" conditioned progress in the negotiations on the success of the Palestinian National Authority (PNA) to prevent and eliminate and preventing all kinds of military acts against it, in other words the suppression of Palestinian opposition that opted for military resistance and the rejection of Oslo. As pragmatic negotiators, regardless of the legitimacy of Oslo, the "Israelis" insisted that any peace agreement should terminate all military threat to their state from any side, even those who oppose Oslo. To them, it is the responsibility of the Palestinian Authority to ensure that peace is the choice of all their people before they think of signing a treaty.

This agreement was reached in Taba, Egypt and was signed in a huge ceremony in Washington. It divided the Palestinian lands in the West Bank was divided into three categories:

Category (A): which included the main Palestinian cities and the demographic centers in the West Bank with the

exception of Al-Khalil (Hebron) and, of course Al-Quds (Jerusalem). This category, which formed around 3% of the total area of the West Bank, was placed under Palestinian military and administrative control.

Category (B): This category, which included most of the Palestinian populated countryside, almost 25% of the area of the West Bank, was placed under Palestinian administrative control, but its security would be maintained by joint Palestinian-"Israeli" forces.

Category (C): It included the rest of the West Bank territories that had to remain under "Israeli" administrative and military control. It formed 72% of the West Bank and included Jewish settlements, closed military zones, and all the borders.

In real terms, the Palestinian areas formed small enclaves surrounded by many permanent "Israeli" checkpoints. Oslo 2 transferred the populated areas which bothered "Israel" a lot to the Palestinian Authority, while all the rest was placed under "Israeli" control. These arrangements were, no doubt, a new form of colonization, a "clean" one!

Soon after Oslo 2, general election for a legislative council were held in the Palestinian areas, which were, however, boycotted by the opposition alliance that consisted of 10 movements, of which the most important were Hamas, Al-Jihad, Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine (PFLP) and the Democratic Front for the Liberation of Palestine (DFLP). Fateh won nearly 75% of the seats and its leader, Yaser Arafat, was elected as the Chairman of the Palestinian National Authority with an 88% majority of the votes.

5. Protocol of Hebron "Al-Khalil", (January 1997): In May 1996, the extremist Likud party, led by Binyamin Netanyahu, returned to power. It opposed Oslo agreements right from the beginning, and maintained that the Palestinians got more than they deserved, and refused to hand over Al-Khalil (Hebron) as agreed in Oslo. In the negotiations that followed over the future of the city, the Palestinians were driven to give concessions, accepting to have only parts of the city under their full control, while the rest, including the old city and the holy shrine, (*Al-Haram Al-Ibraheemi*) remained under "Israeli" full control. Strict security measures were, furthermore, imposed on the 120 thousands Palestinian inhabitants of the city under the guise of security to the 400 Jewish settlers there, turning the life of the formers into hell. Read the full text of the Protocol of Hebron

6. Wye River Memorandum (October 1998): Binyamin Netanyahu and his Likud government continued their apathetic attitude towards the Palestinian Authority and the agreements. The "Israeli" forces did not continue its redeployment as agreed and a new session of negotiations resumed. The pretext given for the "Israeli" delay was the "failure of the Palestinian National Authority (PNA) to adequately cooperate with "Israel" on security matters and its inability to eliminate the Palestinian "terrorism" of Hamas, Al-Jihad and other groups". The PNA was again driven to give more concessions, and Arafat accepted an American proposal that he continuously rejected before, namely "Israelis" withdrawal from 13% of the West Bank only. This acceptance was not enough however; Netanyahu yet demanded that 3% of this area should be an unpopulated natural reserve. An agreement was finally reached on the following:

1. Transferring to the Palestinian side 13% from Area C as follows: 1% to Area (A) under full Palestinian control, while the remaining 12% to Area (B) under administrative Palestinian control provided that the Palestinian side allocate, an area/areas amounting to 3% from the above Area (B), to be designated as Green Areas and/or Nature Reserves. The Palestinian side should observe the established scientific standards, and therefore there will be no changes in the status of these areas, without prejudice to the rights of the existing inhabitants there, including the Bedouins; no new construction were allowed in these areas, though existing roads and buildings may be maintained.

2. 14.2% from Area (B) assigned to Palestinians in Oslo 2 would become Area (A) under full Palestinian Control.

3. Out of 3000 Palestinian prisoners who were supposed to be freed, "Israel" accepted to free only 250, most of whom were detainees without trial or were imprisoned for criminal charges. The few freed political prisoners were re-imprisoned soon after.

4. In return, the Palestinian side has to intensify its efforts to combat Palestinian "terrorism" and stop any form of military-oriented acts against "Israel". Strict measures were to be imposed to confiscate weapons and the Palestinian side committed itself to further cooperation with the "Israeli" authorities and the CIA to oppress Palestinian opposition movements.

5. Both sides committed themselves to resume and intensify negotiations so that an agreement on the final status may be reached by 4 May 1999.

Two months after its signature, the "Israeli" government suspended the implementation of Wye River Memorandum on 20 December 1998.

7. Sharm El-Sheikh Memorandum (Sptember 1999): Since the right wing "Israeli" government under Netanyahu blocked the further implication of Wye River Memorandum, another agreement was needed as soon as the political situation in "Israel" changes. The coming of the Leftist Labor Party under Ehud Barak to power revived the Palestinian hope in resuming the peace process. An agreement was concluded in Sharm El Sheikh, Egypt, which provided a new timeframe for the implementation of the Wye River Memorandum. Both sides, further agreed on postponing the final settlement to September 2000 instead of May 1999, and "Israel" agreed to release some of the Palestinian political prisoners.

8. Camp David Negotiations and the subsequent developments in the Peace Process before the Intifada of Al-Aqsa 2000: According to the timeframe set by Oslo 1993, an agreement on the final status should be reached not later than 4 May 1999. However, this deadline passed without reaching an agreement or even a common understanding. Based on the Oslo timeframe, the Palestinian Authority promised its people of an independent state by September 1998, but due to the frequent "Israeli" delays, this was postponed to May 1999, then to May 2000 and again to September 2000 until it has finally been shifted altogether indefinitely.

For more than one year after the deadline, until May 2000, no real breakthrough was made in the negotiations, and the promises given to the Palestinian people proved to be

meaningless. Both sides were aware of the critical situation, and felt the urgent need to resume negotiations to end this prolonged period of uncertainty that continued for more than eight years.

Although the "Israeli" leftist Prime Minister was seen as the last hope for peace in the area, we have to bear in mind that his political campaign that brought him to power was based on five No's: No to giving back Eastern Jerusalem to Palestinians, Jerusalem should remain the unified and only capital of "Israel", No for returning to the pre-1967 borders, No for the formation of an Arab army in the West Bank and Gaza and No to the return of the Palestinian refugees. Besides, Barak led a slight majority government that had not the necessary support to make any major decision, particularly as it faced a strong anti-peace opposition. Barak's party had only 26 seats out of 120 in the "Israeli" Parliament (Knesset); and his heterogeneous coalition government he formed included far left and far right parties! The "Israeli" people did not give a decisive vote for peace and seemed undetermined in their will to make peace.

Despite these adverse political conditions, and regardless of how far they can go with applying what they propose, both parties had to go to serious negotiation uncovering the remaining of their cards, and determining the fate of the region. The U.S. under President Clinton utilized all its might and influence on both sides and hosted final status negotiations to reach once and for all settlement. President Clinton, with his Secretary of State Madeline Albright cancelled all their commitments to avail themselves to the negotiations for two weeks (12-25 July 2000). Nonetheless, the outcome was a tragic failure.

It may be appropriate to give at this juncture the proposals of both sides in these decisive negotiations:

A. The Palestinian Side under Arafat:

1- "Israel" should withdraw from 98.5% of the West Bank.

2- Parts of the "Israeli" settlements in the West Bank may remain under "Israeli" authority.

3- Roads to those "Israeli" settlements may remain under "Israeli" authority, while the sides of those roads should be under the Palestinian authority. All in all, the Palestinians may at best allow a maximum of 4% of the West Bank to be under "Israeli" authority.

4- In return for this Palestinian land, "Israel" should give the Palestinians 200 km^2 of lands currently under "Israeli" sovereignty (in other terms of Palestinian lands occupied in 1948 and were declared as land of "Israel").

5- The Arab part of Al-Quds (Eastern Jerusalem), including Al-Aqsa Mosque, should become under Palestinian authority, and shall become the capital of the sovereign Palestinian State.

6- As for Al-Khalil (Hebron), the "Israelis" should dissemble their settlements in the city, but Jews will be given a safe passage to the holy shrine (*Al-Haram Al-Ibraheemi*).

7- "Israel" may rent Palestinian lands in the Jordan Valley (Al-Ghour) for a limited period of time and under Palestinian sovereignty.

8- "Israel" has to admit the Palestinian right of return, and its full responsibility for the misery of the refugees. Those who wish to return should be allowed to do so, and those who do not should receive compensation. However, the Palestinian side showed some leniency regarding the return of all the refugees, and indicated that they will accept the return of 100 thousands refugees under Family reunification scheme, while the rest should receive compensation.

9- To alleviate fears of war, the Palestinian State may be free from heavy military equipments.

10- "Israel" should withdraw from Palestinian lands; furthermore, all Palestinian prisoners in "Israel" should be freed immediately after the agreement.

B. The "Israeli" Side under Barak:

1- "Israel" accepts to withdraw from 90% of the West Bank, and to transfer them to full Palestinian sovereignty.

2- Jordan River, the Jordan Valley (Al-Ghour) and Arab quarters in Jerusalem (Al-Quds) may eventually become under Palestinian sovereignty.

3- In return, "Israel" shall retain the main settlements in the West Bank, including those in Jerusalem, and shall keep the settlements and a form of military presence for 15-25 years.

4- With regard to Al-Aqsa Mosque, "Israel" shall control the area under Al-Haram or shall share the Palestinians a part of it.

5- The issue of the refugees should be solved on the basis of compensation and settlement in their then countries of residence. Both the Palestinian State and Jordan will each get 40 billion U.S.$, and both Lebanon and Syria will get 10 billions U.S.$ to absorb the refugees. Barak suggested that the U.S. should cover 25% of these compensations, that shall be given in a period of 10-20 years through an international organization that replaces the UNRWA (United Nations Relief and Work Agency for the refugees in the Near East).

6- "Israel" promised some unspecified aid to the Palestinians, that will include, however, 5 billion U.S.$ to establish modern water infrastructure.

From the aforementioned demands and offers of both sides, and regardless of the practicability of these proposals, we may conclude that Arafat and Barak, were not standing far apart in these negotiations. Indeed, a breakthrough and a final settlement were about to be achieved, although contrary indicators were given to the media by both parties in the interest of political maneuvers. Denis Ross, the American special coordinator of the peace process, said that both sides were very near in making a historic agreement.

However, despite this closeness in positions, both parties stuck firmly to what they offered. To overcome this crisis, President Clinton proposed the so-called Clinton Project in December 2000 that provided for:

1- A Palestinian State will be established over 94-96% of the West Bank and 100% of Gaza Strip.

2- In return "Israeli" settlements, should remain under "Israel's" sovereignty, and the Palestinians should get 1-3% of "Israeli" lands (which are Palestinian lands

occupied in 1948 and declared as the territory of the "State of Israel")

3- The political map of Palestine should be determined according to the following principles: A- 80% of the Jewish settlers in the West Bank should remain where they are. B-Geographic continuity and connectivity of Palestinian territory should be ensured. C- Minimizing the areas of the West Bank that should remain under "Israeli" sovereignty to the least.
4- "Israel" should be able to keep permanent military bases in the Rift Valley (Al-Ghour) to maintain its security. International forces shall monitor these bases for 36 months.
5- As for Jerusalem (Al-Quds) the division would be according to the following principle: areas inhabited by Jews should be under "Israeli" sovereignty and those inhabited by Palestinians should be under Palestinian sovereignty. (Note here that this considers all the "Israeli" acts of settlement and the consequential demographic changes during the 33 years of occupation, which were condemned and considered illegal by continuous U.N. resolutions, are to be legalized.
6- As for the Holy Mosque, Al-Aqsa, there should be a way to guarantee Palestinian monitoring of the Mosque without affecting the religious rights of the Jews in the shrine. The solution could be either Palestinian control over the sanctuary area (Al-Haram) and "Israeli" control over both the Wailing Wall (the western wall of Al-Aqsa Mosque) and the excavations area under the mosque, OR Palestinian control over the sanctuary (Al-Haram), "Israeli" control over the

Wailing Wall and the joint control over the excavations area under the Mosque.

7- For the refugees issue, the main principle should be that the would-be Palestinian State in the West Bank and Gaza is the return place for all Palestinian refugees, and not "Israel". However, "Israel" might absorb some of them.

8- The acceptance and application of this project should end of the Palestinian-"Israeli" conflict, and none of the parties shall in future make any further demands.

Arafat did not accept this project in total, though he endorsed as a framework for an agreement and with some reservation on certain issues, particularly that of the refugees, that should be discussed with the "Israeli" side. The "Israeli" side, on the other hand, also accepted the project also as a framework, but had its own reservation, mainly on the Palestinian control over Al-Aqsa Mosque. However, Clinton's presidency ended without the conclusion of a final agreement, and this failure consequently triggered the area once more to explosive violence.

The Logic of Negotiations

When do negotiations happen?

Negotiations are in many cases conducted when them when the parties concerned are keen to resolve disputed issues, but this is not always the case. A party may indulge in them as a delaying tactic to gain more time to consolidate his power or change the situation in the field, or both parties may accept them to avoid confrontation for a while. The question here is how can we classify Oslo and its consequential Peace Process.

Legitimacy of negotiations

In other words who has the right to decide to conduct these negotiations and to whom are they binding?

The outcome of any negotiations is binding to the participating and represented parties, but not to those who are not represented or looking for representation, let alone their opponents. Any party has the right to force all its members to accept the provisions of such negotiations but can not do so on non-participating or opposing parties.

To be concrete, the Palestinian leadership under Yaser Arafat, though widely respected, and internationally accepted, does not represent all the Palestinian political factions, and therefore any agreement that this leadership may sign is compelling only to Fateh and other represented groups, but not to all Palestinian unless they accepted it in a free public

referendum, or at least until all the political factions endorse it unanimously. In fact, Oslo had been opposed by a united front of 10 Palestinian factions, including Hamas, Al-Jihad, and Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine, who arguably have a much broader popular base than Fateh's. Since none of these conditions were fulfilled in the case of Oslo, it is not legitimate in principle, unless such "legitimacy" is imposed by force and political oppression of the opposition. It may be argued that democratic election did take place and were won by the very same leadership, but we have to consider that this election had been carried in the context of Oslo, which does not, no matter how much international support it gained, meet the above conditions, the Oslo had, in fact been opposed by many Palestinians who did not take part in the elections as one of its outcomes, they were isolated and later on even "criminalized" for not accepting the so-called "legitimate agreements" of Oslo! Furthermore, Palestinians inside the West Bank and Gaza Strip, who had the chance to participate in this election, form 36.5% only of the Palestinian people around the world who are also concerned with their consequences.

Negotiations and the Intifada

One might wonder about the crazy acceleration of political developments in the Palestinian-"Israeli" conflict, which, until recently, had been thought to be on its way to permanent peace. In the year 2000, both parties were negotiating "the final touches" for declaring an Independent Palestinian State, and for achieving the final settlement for a struggle that troubled and exhausted the region and the whole world at large. How could the situation, so rapidly, reach a status of the worst bloodshed that Palestine witnessed in the last 35

years? An international observer may think that both parties should be crazy to allow such dangerous acceleration of events. For what had been achieved, no matter how unjust its conditions may seem to some parties, is much better than what is going on today. Nonetheless, human behavior is not always governed by. but dictated most of the time by more complex motives, that is, of course, if we agree that there is a standard "logic" for human behavior.

In principle, negotiations should broadly both parties, and a final settlement must be completely convincing to both of them. In other words. whenever one of the parties uses power to dictate conditions and acquire more rights than it should, the settlement will never be final, because, as soon as the balance of power changes, the weaker party will try to get back its rights, and loose its will to compromise. With this general rule in mind, we may argue that: "Israel" exploited its military and economic might, and its profound influence on the United States' decision making process to force Arafat to give more concessions and to forgo the rights of his own people. Thus, there can be no guarantee, especially if we bear in mind the above note on the legitimacy of negotiations, that the people of Arafat will accept these concessions forever. For they gain their legitimacy from the status quo and not from the fair rights of each party, particularly when such concessions lead to great disappointment among the people. No one can guarantee that these people will continue accepting the status quo no matter how much oppression may be used to force them to do so. This is how the intifada broke out of the blue and aggravated beyond any control.

Disputed Issues Postponed by Oslo Agreement

As you might have noted from reading the section of Oslo Agreement, both parties had mainly agreed in both agreements to start a trust building process, to accept each other as a legitimate partner and representative of his people, and to negotiate all the disputed matters throughout a specific timeframe that should end by 1999. The negotiations should, furthermore, be based on the U.N resolutions and finally the agreements deal with the details of handing over Gaza and Jericho to the Palestinian leadership. The signature of these agreements marked the beginning of the peace era, that initially included nothing more than gestures of goodwill.

In practical terms, all what the agreement had achieved was a promise to negotiate the disputed matters, i.e. to postpone them. But postponing them was not a smart move, because the plight of today started since then. This meant that both parties lacked the will and the bravery to negotiate these crucial matters, and they simply postponed the next inevitable round of confrontation. It might be said that is like been wise after the event, but this very same view had been earlier expressed by many intellectuals around the world, especially in the Arab World, of whom the most famous is Edward Said who wrote critical books on Oslo.

The postponed disputed issues, which are ***the main*** issues as well, are:

1- **Al-Quds (Jerusalem):** The controversy has been around whether Al-Quds (Jerusalem) is the capital of Palestine or "Israel". Both parties claim it as the Capital of their states. However, even if we consider the U.N. resolutions as valid bases for argumentation, East Al-Quds is part of the territory occupied by "Israel" in 1967, which is internationally recognized as Palestinian. Hence it should be a part of the Palestinian state. Many of the U.N. resolutions has, indeed, affirmed the Arab identity of East Jerusalem, that includes the Old City and the holy shrines. They consider any "Israeli" unilateral alteration in the demography or geography of the city as illegal. Oslo Agreements did not deal at all with this issue, but postponed it to the final status that was negotiated in Camp David in July 2000 and ended with a historic failure, particularly on the issue of Al-Quds; a development that dashed all hopes to achieve a negotiated settlement, and indirectly led the area to the current explosive situation (2002).

2- **Palestinian Refugees:** This issue forms the human essence of the Palestinian struggle. For when we say that the struggle is for land, we metaphorically mean land. In principle it is about people, about what land means to them, about land as a locale for their social interactions, relations and structures. It is where their culture thrived and therefore it is an integral component of it. Land can be found everywhere. If the conflict is just about land then plainly there are enough lands in North America and Australia that to absorb all the refugees of the world not only of Palestine. Indeed many proposals to solve the problem of the Palestinian

refugees were based on such approach, i.e. to find the refugees a land that absorbs them; as if the issue was plain calculations. Any solution that does not consider the above meaning of land, and its significance to the people, is over simplistic and is doomed to failure. Palestinian refugees are the largest in number in the world, and their plight is the oldest one as well. They have been in their new "diaspora" since 1948. Most solutions today propose giving them compensations for their lost properties, and to settle them as citizens in new lands, while only a small portion of them would be allowed to go back to their lands in "Israel". Again only the material side of this purely human journey of suffering is entertained in this and other solutions. The UNRWA (United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East), registers 3,521,130 refugees as quoted before, but this is an underestimated figure. For it counts only the refugees who stay in registered camps, and who register themselves with UNRWA to benefit from its services, but do not count the many who live in unregistered, or outside the refugee camps and do not need the UNRWA services because they are able to provide themselves privately with better ones. Palestinian sources estimate the refugees as 6,690,000 for the year 2002, of whom 260,000 are internal refugees inside "Israel" and 1,600,000 live in the camps inside other Palestinian territories of the West Bank and Gaza Strip. The issue of the Refugees was among the unsettled issues in Camp David, and was not part of its top priorities. Nonetheless, sooner or later, it was going to be a main agenda for subsequent

negotiations round. The refugees issue involves frustrated humans who have been living in inhuman conditions since 1948, and suffered war and migration more than once. They have been massacred by "Israeli" forces who chased them in other countries - like Lebanon-, and they live as less than second class citizens in the "host" countries. They are sufficiently frustrated to be the next bomb of the area if their plight was not approached wisely.

3- **Settlements**: Since the "Israeli" occupation of the West Bank and Gaza Strip, tens of "Israeli" settlements were established to isolate the Palestinian population demographically and create disconnected enclaves that do not allow the establishment of one state or one society. "Israel" confiscated all the lands needed for such settlements and some around it for "security reasons". According to 2002 estimations, there are 380.000 "Israeli" settlers in the West Bank (including 190,000 in East Jerusalem), 20,000 in the Golan Heights and 6,500 in Gaza Strip, most of whom are fanatic Jews who are willing to take the trouble of staying in these isolated settlements, because they consider this to be a religious duty. They are allowed to carry arms which they use frequently against civilians; the most famous of their crimes was committed by Barouche Goldstein, an "Israeli" settler in Hebron, who killed 30 civilians in Al-Khalil Mosque during a prayer in February 1993. Settlements now form stumbling blocks in the face of drawing a map for a geographically and demographically integrated Palestinian State. Although the Labor Party showed some flexibility regarding Gaza Strip

settlements, it considered the West Bank's settlements, especially those in East Jerusalem, to be nonnegotiable, as you may see in the final peace settlement proposed by Barak.

4- **Borders**: "Israel" aims at keeping the firm control over the international borders for "security reasons" and is determined not to allow the would-be Palestinian state any control over the immigration department. Everyone who enters or leaves should be subject to "Israeli" inspection. On the other hand, the Palestinian leadership wants to achieve a totally sovereign state that controls its borders. No agreement was made on this point until the last Camp David peace talks. However, compared to the above matters, this issue seems to be less complicated, but still remains a major point of disagreement.

5- **Water resources**: Some experts expected that the next war in the Middle East would be on water, as the region is among the driest in the world, and has high population density. Although "war" erupted for other reasons, water still remains an important point of disagreement, especially so because of the increasingly drying up climate. "Israel" has always strove at satisfying all its water needs, even at the expense of neighbors, and it has already redirected the Jordan River depriving its already suffering neighbor. Currently, around 80% of water resources of Palestine goes to "Israel", leaving the 3.485 millions population of the West Bank and Gaza to survive on the remaining 20%.

In conclusion, until March 2001, after 8 years of peace negotiations, all what the Palestinian National Authority (PNA) were given was full control over only 17% of the West Bank (1000km^2) and 55% of the Gaza Strip (200 km^2), with some 25% of West Bank under partial civil control. All in all, the PNA real control is over 1200 km^2, or 4.4% of the area of Historical Palestine.

Islamic Stand

Islamic View of Land

Islam conceives all Muslims as brothers, irrespective of their countries, language or ethnic origin. This brotherhood is not enforced upon them to embrace one culture or one lifestyle, but it comes from their sharing of one worldview and the same concept towards life and the fate of humankind as provided by Islam. Based on this, any land inhabited by Muslims is a Muslim land that does not belong only to the ethnic group(s) that inhabit it, but to all Muslims. As land owned by Muslims throughout the generations, it should not be forsaken by range of owners at anytime. Once a land is "opened" to Islam, it becomes Muslim land that should never be "closed" in the face of the message of Islam, the final and righteous message to all humankind. Besides, Muslim Holy Places are the core and center of Islam and its propagation, and their security should therefore be a top Muslim priority, they are important as Muslim lands, yet most importantly as Holy centers.

Palestine was Holy for Muslims since the beginning of their history, even before they formed any kind of political entity. It was the first *Qibla* (the direction to which Muslims pray), and the destination of the nightly journey of Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him), known as *Al-Isra'*, and the departure point of his journey to heaven, *Al-Mi'raj*. Since then, Al-Quds (Jerusalem) has been known as the Gate to

Heavens. 36 years after the beginning of the Islamic call in Mecca, and 15 years after the establishment of the Muslim political entity in Medina, Al-Quds (Jerusalem), together with the rest of Palestine, became under Muslim rule. Most of Palestine's population converted to Islam, and Muslims continued to be the people of the area since then. They continued to rule Palestine all the time, except for the period of the Crusades (1099-1187). Compared to all other rules, Muslims rule of Palestine it for the longest, around 1300 years.

Defending Land in Islam

Based on the above understanding, once a land is violated or occupied by non-Muslims, it is the duty of all Muslims to defend it and return it to the orbit of Islam. This duty falls upon the Muslims as a group and upon each and every individual. Once a land is occupied, its Muslim inhabitants should defend it, and if they could not combat and face the enemy, then this becomes a duty of every Muslim in the neighboring areas. In case the inhabitants and the neighbors are unable to face the danger, then this becomes a general duty of all Muslims, no matter how far they are from it.

The above doctrine forms the essence of Defensive Jihad, i.e. war waged to defend Islam and Muslims, which capitalizes on two principles: moral and political unity of all Muslims that requires them to act jointly, and their ability to mobilize in short time all the masses forming a huge power in order to prevent any occupation or end it swiftly before it extinguishes the Muslim identity of the inhabitants and therefore the land. This was how the Muslim vitality revived and ended the massive threats of the Crusaders and the

Mongols, otherwise Muslim civilization could have vanished once and for all.

Islam's View on Reconciliation

Since the forsaking of Muslim lands is not allowed in Islam, then any reconciliation that leads to permanent loss to the enemies or surrender Muslim rights is not tolerated. Even if such an agreement is done, though respecting covenants and treaties is in principle obligatory to Muslims, such an agreement is void and not binding because it lacks legitimacy right from the beginning. If a part or a generation of the Muslim *Ummah* signs it, the other groups and generations rest should not accept it and should totally disregard it. (Ummah means the unified universal group of Muslims; it has no equivalent in English)

However, in cases where peace is needed to prepare for the next round, or if continuity of war brings unbearable hardship that can be avoided without causing permanent losses, Muslim leadership may then decide the best course in these circumstances. Thus, temporary agreements and truce declarations are acceptable, even if they continue for long periods, as long as they are in the interest of the Muslims.

Muslim Rulings (*Fatwas*)

Since the beginning of the Zionist drive in Palestine, and up to 1977 Muslim scholars had unanimously ruled that Islam prohibits Zionist acquisition of land and issued *Fatwas* that prohibited any transfer of land or property to them. By 1977, and after the visit of the Egyptian President, Sadat, to "Israel", some official government *Muftis* issued *Fatwas* in support of Sadat's compromising policy with "Israel", which

faced widespread public and official rejection all over the Muslim World. Similarly, few scholars advocated compromise with the Zionists during the latest wave for "peace" that swept the Muslim World in the 1990s.

But the general position of the majority of the scholars on this issue was as follows: Palestine is a Muslim-Arab land, that belongs to all Muslims throughout the generations, and no one has the right or the authority to give it up to others. Jihad is the way to liberate Palestine. Zionists are violators who have extorted Palestine from its owners and their actions should not be therefore approved in anyway or under any conditions, The *Fatwas* have, furthermore, stressed the necessity of preserving the Islamic identity of Palestine and rallied the will and power of the *Ummah* to liberate it.

Most famous among these *Fatwas* were: the *Fatwa* of the Supreme Muslim Council in Al-Quds, issued on the 25th of January 1935 that prohibited selling lands to Jews, and of Al-Azhar, issued on 29 November 1947, they declared the illegitimacy of the U.N. partition plan and urged Muslims to reject it. A further *Fatwa* issued by Al-Azhar in 1956 stated clearly that reconciliation with "Israel" is not permissible, and that the fight against "Israeli" existence is compulsory to all Muslims. In February 1968 the International Islamic Conference, convened in Pakistan, issued a *Fatwa* that prohibited reconciliation and called for resistance and liberation.

When the PLO recognized U.N. Security Council resolutions 181 on the partition of Palestine, 242 and 338, and accepted the right of "Israel" to exist and peace negotiations with her in November 1988. Muslim scholars from 19 countries issued a *Fatwa* in 1989 that declared Palestine a

Muslim land which should remain so until the end of time, and that no one has the right to change this reality no matter what authority he has. It was signed by respected scholars, like late Muhammad Al-Ghazali and Dr. Yusof Al-Qardawi, who had all agreed that Jihad is the only means to liberate this Sacred Land.

Since Oslo of 1993, many other *Fatwas* were issued to emphasize this position and to prohibit any form of permanent settlement with "Israel", including Oslo, which the Muslims are not obligated to accept.

Appendices

I. Chronology of Palestine

II. Documents

III. Bibliography

I. Chronology of Palestine

Pre-Islamic History of Palestine: Landmarks

500,000 B.C.: The first traced form of human life started in Palestine.

12,000 B.C.: Palestinian man started a communal life, depending on herding animals and producing handicrafts, in a civilization known as the Natufian Civilization. This period, known as the (Mesolithic period), falls in the Middle Stone Age.

8,000 B.C.: The first city built by man on earth, Jericho. It was built by the inhabitants of Palestine, indicating that the first trace of human civilization started on this land. The city depended on agriculture and animal breeding at that time.

4,000 B.C.: Several other cities were built during the period called the Metallic Stone Age. Traces of the first decorated pottery known in history were found in the site of the ancient cities of Megiddo and Beisan.

4,000 B.C.: The first Semitic wave of migration started from the Arab Peninsula to the North, mainly to the areas of Palestine and Iraq.

2,500 B.C.: Semitic migration reached its peak, bringing different tribes: The Amorites to Eastern Jordan, and the Canaanites to Palestine and Lebanon, while the tribes known as the Phoenicians, a subgroup of the Canaanites, settled by the coast in North Palestine and Lebanon. Another Canaanite subgroup, known as the Jebusites, settled in central Palestine and built the city of Al-Quds (Jerusalem) that they called Jebus. The Canaanites became the dominant group in the land that was named after them for a long time.

2,500-2,000 B.C.: The Canaanites established a blooming civilization in Palestine, and, by the end of this period, the Land of Canaan had more than 200 cities and villages, many of which exist until our present day. Most of these cities are now major cities in Palestine, including: Shechem (Nablus today), Beisan, Askalan (Known in Hebrew as Ashkelon), Akka (Acre), Haifa, Al-Khaleel (Hebron), Asdud, Bait Lahm (Bethlehem), Beir Al-Sabe (Beersheba).

1805 B.C.: Prophet Ibrahim (Abraham) who was probably an Amorite living in Ur, Babylon, migrated to Harran (North Syria) and subsequently settled in Palestine. He had two sons from two wives: Isma el (Ishmael), the grandfather of the Adnanis, a main branch of the Arabs, from Hajar, and Ishaq (Isaac), the grandfather of the Jews, from Sarah. Ibrahim (Abraham), his wife Sarah and his son Ishaq (Isaac) were buried in a cave they bought from the Canaanites, known as Makfeela Cave, on whose site the Mosque of Al-Khaleel was built.

1656 B.C.: Prophet Ya qoub (Jacob, Known also as Israel) migrated to Egypt with his sons from whom the Jewish tribes descended. They stayed in Egypt until 1250 B.C. when Prophet Musa (Moses) came to them with the divine order to go to Palestine.

1675 B.C.: The Hyksos invaded Egypt. They are believed to be of Semitic origin and composed of Canaanites, Amorites and other groups. They lived in Syria, where they introduced horses, military chariots and other armaments to the area, and governed Egypt for nearly 100 years. The Hyksos were expelled in 1557 B.C. by the Egyptian leader Ahmose who chased them to Palestine and Syria.

1511 B.C.: The Egyptians marched to Palestine under the leadership of Thutmose III and subjected the land of Canaan to their rule for approximately four centuries. However, the Egyptian rule over Palestine was unstable, and the Pharos were forced to dispatch several campaigns to subdue the Canaanites.

1227 B.C.: The sons of Jacob (*Bani Israel*) continued to live in Egypt and grew in number until Prophet Musa (Muses) was ordained to take them to Palestine. However, he died before entering Palestine.

1225 B.C.: The Aegean Philistines started flowing from the Greek islands, mainly Crete, to the coastal areas of Egypt and Syria, settling mainly in the coastal cities of Palestine. The Philistines, who formed the majority of the coastal population, introduced the craftsmanship of metal weapons. They had great influence on the civilization of the Canaanites, and the land eventually took their name.

1086 B.C.: Prophet Musa (Moses) died and Joshua (Yusha') became the leader of the Jews. He led their struggle to enter Palestine, managed to cross Jordan River from the east and captured Jericho, thus making the first Jewish presence in Palestine.

1004 B.C.: After the death of Shaul, Hebrew tribes divided over the issue of leadership until 1004 B.C. when Prophet Dawud (David) assumed the throne and consolidated his Kingdom. On his death in 963 B.C., his son Prophet Sulaiman (Solomon) succeeded him. He built the famous temple that took his name and expanded the Kingdom. He died in 923 B.C.

923 B.C.: Jewish tribes were once more divided over the succession of Solomon. The Kingdom was divided into two parts: Israel and Judah, that were engaged in a fierce war in which both sides looked for help from other neighboring kingdoms.

923-721 B.C.: The Kingdom of Israel was established in the northern part of the Kingdom of Solomon, with Samaria as its capital. It was twice as big as the other Kingdom, and had thrice its population. The Kingdom of Israel was destroyed by the Assyrians in the year 721 B.C., and most of its Jewish inhabitants were transferred to northern Iraq.

932-586 B.C.: The Kingdom of Judah was established in the southern part of the Kingdom of Solomon, with Jerusalem as its capital. For most of its life, this Kingdom was fragile and subjected to strong foreign influence until it finally fell at the hands of the Chaldeans (Babylonians), led by Nebuchadnezzar, who took 50,000 Jewish captives.

516 B.C.: The Persians seized Babylon and their king, Cyrus II, ordered the return of Jews to Jerusalem. These returnees managed to restore the Temple. A form of autonomy was allowed to them during this period.

332 B.C.: Alexander the Great conquered Palestine, this terminating a 200 years rule by the Persian Empire. First he conquered Jerusalem then marched to Gaza, the last stronghold in greater Syria, which he conquered after a fierce battle in which he was injured.

323 B.C.: On the death of Alexander in Babylon, his generals contended the throne, and the empire was thus divided into two main parts: Syria and the Eastern regions under the Seleucids, and Egypt and Palestine under the Ptolemaic dynasty. The latter ruled Palestine until 198 B.C.

198 B.C.: The Seleucids managed to expel the Ptolemaic rulers and replaced them in Palestine.

198-141 B.C.: The Seleucids continued to rule Palestine and forced the Jews to abide by the Greek traditions, customs and language. It is said that the conquest of Alexander the Great and the rule of the successor kingdoms had generally resulted in a great Greek cultural influence in the area.

141 B.C.: Soon, however, the Jews waged a rebellion to establish their own autonomous rule, which they did under the Maccabeans whose Kingdom attained independence at some point. The Maccabeans, in turn, forced the local population to convert to Judaism, and committed horrible massacres to achieve this goal.

63 B.C.: The Romans seized all the properties of the successors of Alexander the Great, and reached Palestine by the year 63 B.C. The Romans rebuilt some of the major cities in the area, like Samaria, and stripped the Maccabean King from his title, although they invested on him with some internal autonomous powers.

27 B.C.: On the outbreak of war between the Roman generals, following the assassination of Julius Caesar, the Persians took advantage of this instability to return Palestine to their rule. Soon afterwards, however, Anthony, the Roman general who governed Syria, managed to retain Roman control over Palestine. He entered Jerusalem in the year 27 B.C. and executed the last Maccabean King.

27 B.C.: Anthony appointed Herod ibn Antepas as the ruler of Palestine. Herod, who converted to Judaism, restored many ancient cities and sites including the Temple of Solomon. He killed Prophets Yahya (John) and Zakaria (Zacharias).

6 B.C.: The Romans placed Palestine under their direct rule.

4 B.C.: Prophet Isa (Jesus Christ) was born about this time. He lived and grew up in Nazareth, and at the age of thirty he started traveling throughout Palestine preaching the unification of God as well as his mercy and love for mankind. Jesus faced rejection from the Jews, who finally plotted, in cooperation with one of his apostles, to hand him to the Roman ruler for execution.

66 C.E.: A Jewish revolt broke, the Roman leader, Titus, besieged Jerusalem, entered it in 70 C.E., and burned the Temple.

131-135 C.E: Hadrian, the Roman Emperor, crushed the last Jewish revolution in Palestine. Hadrian annihilated Jerusalem, rebuilt the city calling it Aelia Capitolina and erected a statue for Jupiter upon the ruins of the Temple of Herod. It was at this time that Jewish ties to Palestine were brought to an end.

267-272 C.E.: The armies of Palmyra, under the leadership of Zenobia, controlled Palestine for almost five years until the Roman

emperor, Aurelius, defeated the Kingdom in 272 C.E. The people of Palmyra were Arabs like the Nabateans of Petra, who controlled Palestine for sometime before the emergence of Palmyra.

326 C.E.: Constantine, the Roman Emperor, accepted Christianity and his mother, Queen Helena, visited Palestine where she built the Church of the Holy Sepulcher (Resurrection) in Jerusalem and the Church of the Nativity in Bethlehem.

395 C.E.: The Roman Empire was divided into two: the Eastern Roman (Byzantine) with Constantinople as its capital, and the Western Roman Empire with Rome as its capital. Greater Syria, including Palestine, was under the former.

529 C.E.: The Ghassanis, Yemeni Arab tribes that adhered to Christianity during the fourth century, entered the Byzantine political arena. The Romans used them to quell one of the rebellions in Palestine, and as a front defense line against the Persians who, in turn, used other Arab tribes known as Al-Manathera for the same purpose.

570 C.E.: A great man, whose message will have decisive influence on the history of Palestine and the world, was born in Mecca, Prophet Muhammad (pbuh).

610 C.E.: Revelation came to Prophet Muhammad (pbuh).

610 C.E.: Heraclius took charge of the Byzantine empire, and during his reign the armies of Chosroes, the Persian King, attacked Syria and advanced to Palestine, occupying Caesarea.

614 C.E: Chosroes entered Jerusalem burning the Church of the Nativity to the ground, and killing 90,000 local Christians.

619 C.E.: Prophet Muhammad was taken in the nightly journey known as (*Isra'*) to Al-Quds (Jerusalem), where he led the Prophets in a prayer and started his journey to heaven (*Al-Mi'raj*). Al-Quds is honored for being the starting point for this journey to heaven in which the Prayers were ordained to all Muslims. Al-

Quds (Jerusalem) has been the direction to which Muslims prayed before they were ordered to face *Al-Ka'ba* in Mecca.

627 C.E.: Heraclius marched against the Persian forces in Greater Syria, and managed to recapture the whole area, including Palestine, to his rule.

634 C.E: Muslim campaigns to open Greater Syria to the new faith started in the period of the first rightly-guided Caliph Abu Bakr. He dispatched an expedition to Palestine under the leadership of Amr ibn Al-As who defeated the Byzantines in several battles, of which the most important was *Ajnadeen* that brought southern Palestine to Muslim control.

636 C.E.: During the period of the second Caliph, 'Omar ibn Al-Khattab, Muslims under the leadership of Abu 'Ubaidah ibn Al-Jarrah and Khalid ibn Al- Waleed, achieved a decisive victory over the Byzantines in the Battle of *Al-Yarmouk*, northern Jordan, bringing the whole Greater Syria, including Palestine, under their rule.

Palestine during the Islamic Period: Landmarks

636 C.E.: During the period of Caliph Omar ibn Al-Khattab, the second campaign marched to Greater Syria under the leadership of Khalid ibn Al- Waleed. This campaign resulted in a decisive Byzantine defeat in the Battle of *Al-Yarmouk*, in northern Jordan, thus the whole Greater Syria, including Palestine, became under Muslim rule that continued until 1917 C.E.

Sophronius, the Patriarch of Jerusalem, conditioned that the city to the Caliph in person in order to surrender. Thus, Caliph Omar ibn Al-Khattab came to Al-Quds and gave a written undertaking to its people that granted them safety, freedom of religion and the right to keep their churches intact. The document was known as "The Covenant of Omar" or (*Al-`Uhdah Al-`Umarriya*).

685-705 C.E.: Caliph Abdel Malek ibn Marwan built the Dome of the Rock, and started a new project to build Al-Aqsa Mosque in its vicinity. Both, along with the surrounding area, became known as *Al-Haram Al-Sharif* (the Holy Sanctuary). Most of the population of the area has accepted Islam and the Arabic language became the official language after being the spoken language only.

750 C.E.: The Abbasids took over the Muslim Caliphate, and Palestine, became a part of the Abbasid State.

861 C.E.: The first Abbasid reign ended by the assassination of Caliph Al-Mutawakkil. Turkish Saljukis took advantage of their privileged administrative positions, as ministers and chief ministers, to control the state, and the Abbasid Caliph became a mere figurehead. At the same time, local governors, or *Walis*, expanded their authorities at the expense of the central administration in Baghdad. This decline of the Abbasid authority progressively continued until the local rulers, who were previously appointed to their positions, established their own local dynasties,

declared independence and expanded their territories at the expense of the Abbasid Center.

875-905 C.E.: The Toloni family established, under the nominal rule of the Abbasids, its own local monarchy in Egypt, and expanded to Palestine at the expense of the Abbasids.

935-969 C.E.: The Ikhshidi family followed the footsteps of the Tolonis, and established its own monarchy in Egypt, and subsequently extended its rule to Palestine.

969 C.E.: By this year, the Fatimids established their rule in Egypt, and managed to control Palestine.

1071 C.E.: The Turkish Seljukis seized Palestine from the Fatimids.

1095 C.E.: the Roman Pope, Urban II, called for a rescue operation of Jerusalem from the Muslims, and began his preparations for the Crusades. The Crusades were a series of military campaigns sent to Palestine and the Levant (The term then used for the East) to capture as much territory as possible.

1096 C.E.: The Crusade armies assembled and marched east by land.

1098 C.E.: On the eve of the Crusades, the Fatimids managed to retain control over Palestine.

1099 C.E.: While Muslim rulers were in the midst of greedy wars for power, the Crusaders' armies conquered Al-Quds (Jerusalem) in 15 July 1099 C.E. and massacred 70,000 of the population. They established the Latin Kingdom of Jerusalem, as well as three other duchies in the rest of Greater Syria.

1144 C.E.: The ruler (*Wali*) of Mosul in Iraq, Imad Al-din Zanki, launched a liberation war to counter the crusades, and managed to recapture the Christian duchy of Al-Ruha (Urra). After his martyrdom in 1146, his son Nur Al-Din Mahmoud (1146-1174) successfully continued his father's project of Jihad and unification.

1147 C.E.: The second Crusade started with a military advance from Europe towards the east, but with less success this time.

1171 C.E.: Based on the directive of Nur Al-Din Mahmoud, his successor, Salahuddin Al-Ayyubi (Saladin) on 10 September, abolished the Fatimid Caliphate in Egypt uniting both Egypt and Syria in one Muslim state, and resumed the preparation of a huge military campaign to liberate Al-Quds (Jerusalem) and its holy sites.

1187 C.E.: On 4 July, the Battle of Hittin took place against a crusader alliance under the leadership of King Ghe of Jerusalem. This was a great victory for Salahuddin who regained control of the main cities, and finally besieged Al-Quds, which surrendered in the 2 October of that same year. He showed great religious tolerance by allowing the defeated Crusaders to leave the city without their weapons, and after paying a small ransom.

1189-1192 C.E.: This conquest of Jerusalem led to the third Crusade, led by King Richard (the Lionhearted) of England, King Philip Augustus of France and Frederick, the Emperor of Germany. The Crusaders occupied Akka (Acre) in 1191, and a three years and three months peace deal, known as the Treaty of Al-Ramlah, was concluded in 1 September 1192 between Salahuddin and King Richard. The agreement left Al-Quds under the control of the Muslims, though the Christians were allowed to make pilgrimage to the city. The coastal strip between Yafa (Jaffa) and Akka (Acre) remained under the Crusaders' control, but the rest of the coast, from Asqalan (Askelon) southwards, remained under Salahuddin's rule.

Modern History of Palestine: Landmarks

Sixteenth century: Calls for the "restoration" of the Jews to Palestine appeared among Protestant thinkers and led, together with several later developments, to the emergence of Zionism, which called for the establishment of a home for the Jews in Palestine.

Nineteenth Century: Some Jewish thinkers such as Y. Alkalai, Z. Kalischer, M. Hess and J. Pinsker called for the "return" of the Jews to "their" homeland, Palestine, a trend that gradually gained increasing popularity among the Jews. In 1882 organized Jewish immigration started following anti-Semitism campaigns in Russia that forced large number of Jews to migrate in the quest of safety, mostly in the U.S. Of the 2,367,000 Jews who migrated from Russia during 1881-1914, only 55,000 (2.3%) chose Palestine as their destination.

1895 C.E.: The total population of Palestine was then approximately 500,000. Of this population, around 47,000 were Jews, of whom some were part of the indigenous population and the remaining were small groups that had migrated to Palestine for purely religious reasons.

27-29 August 1897 C.E.: The first Zionist Conference was held in Basel, Switzerland. It established the World Zionist Organization (WZO) to achieve the Zionist aim of establishing a Jewish state in Palestine.

1901-1902: The President of WZO, Theodore Hertzl, tried to persuade the Ottoman Sultan, Abdulhamid II, to allow Jewish immigration to Palestine; in return for WZO's financial help to the ailing Ottoman State. The Sultan categorically rejected the offer.

16 May 1916 C.E.: Negotiations between Britain, France, Russia, and later Italy, lead to the secret Sikes-Picot Agreement that allocated Ottoman Arab territories to different .European

Powers. Since sacred sites to the three major world religions existed there, an international regime had been initially envisaged for Palestine.

1916 C.E.: (May) Jamal Pasha, the Ottoman governor of Greater Syria, hanged in Beirut and Damascus 21 Arab leaders and intellectuals, including 2 Palestinians.

10 June 1916 C.E.: Sherif Husein, the prince of Mecca, launched what came to be known The Great Arab Revolution against the Ottoman rule in Arab provinces. The British forces managed to capture Greater Syria and Iraq with the help of the forces of the Sherif. Contrary to a British solemn promise to the Sherif, Arab countries fell under British and French colonization instead of becoming independent.

2 November 1917 C.E.: The British Foreign Secretary, Sir Arthur James Balfour, issued the famous Balfour Declaration that stated: "His Majesty's Government view with favor the establishment in Palestine of a national home for the Jewish people, and will use their best endeavors to facilitate the achievement of this objective, it being clearly understood that nothing shall be done which may prejudice the civil and religious rights of existing non-Jewish communities in Palestine, or the rights and political status enjoyed by Jews in any other country." The Declaration was approved by the Cabinet.

9 December 1917 C.E.: British Forces occupied southern and central Palestine, including Al-Quds (Jerusalem). Many Palestinians had initially viewed them as allied forces that helped the Arab revolution, but their real colonial intentions were soon realized, and resistance erupted.

4-10 April 1920 C.E.: The first Palestinian uprising against the Zionist project took place in Prophet's Musa Festival in Al-Quds (Jerusalem).

26 April 1920 C.E.: The St. Remon Conference convened on 25 April and, as a compromise, the Allied Supreme Council

decided to place Palestine, which was destined under the Sikes-Picot agreement to be under international administration, under British tutelage.

1-15 May 1921 C.E.: Within a year of Palestine's coming under British civil administration, in May 1921, an uprising broke out in Yaffa (Jaffa). 47 Jews were killed and 146 injured; while 48 Arabs were killed and 73 injured.

1922 C.E.: The British government issued a statement on 1 July, referred to as the "Churchill Memorandum", which disclaims "wholly Jewish Palestine" or, to effect "the subordination of the Arab population, language or culture in Palestine". But, at the same time, the statement made it clear that the Balfour Declaration is not susceptible to change, which meant a continued increase of the Jewish community through immigration.

1922 C.E.: The text of the mandate was approved by the League of Nations on 24 July. It incorporated the Balfour Declaration and recognized the "historic connection of the Jewish people with Palestine" as a prelude for reconstituting their "national home" in Palestine.

1922 C.E.: (October) The First British census in Palestine showed that its total population amounted to 757,182 (only 11% Jewish).

4 March 1924 C.E.: The Islamic Caliphate system was officially abolished in Istanbul. Though it had only nominally been practiced for centuries. This was the first time since the establishment of the Muslim state in Medina (622 C.E.) that Muslims did not have a caliph. It also indicated a new direction since the time of the Medina State to separate Islam from the state.

25 March 1925 C.E.: Palestinian general strike to protest against a private visit by Lord Balfour to Jerusalem.

15 August-2 September 1929 C.E.: "*Al-Buraq*" Revolt broke out as Palestinians defended the Western Wall of Al-Aqsa

Mosque: new Jewish immigrants had raised claims that this Wall was a holly Jewish site, named the Wailing Wall, and planned to seize it. 133 Jews were killed and 339 injured: 116 Palestinians were killed and 232 injured, most Palestinian causalities resulted from attacks by British forces.

1930 C.E.: (October) The British government published the Passfield White Paper, which stated that Jewish immigration and land purchases should be restricted.

13 February 1931 C.E.: A letter (McDonald's Letter) sent by the British Prime Minister to Weizman made it clear that Palestine would be governed in accordance with the Churchill Policy of 1922, and that the restrictions suggested by Lord Passfield on Jewish immigration and land transfers would not be applied.

1931 C.E.: (November) Second British census of Palestine showed a total population of 1,035,154 (16.9% Jewish).

1933 C.E.: The new Nazi government in Germany signed the secret treaty of "Ha'afara" with the WZO to facilitate the transfer of the Jewish population to Palestine.

1933 C.E.: (October) Palestinians reacted violently to the huge influx of immigrants, clashes erupted mainly in Al-Quds (Jerusalem) and Yafa (Jaffa), 35 Palestinians were killed and 225 were injured. This was the first Palestinian revolt that had mainly targeted the British colonizers for their patronization of the Zionist project.

20 November 1935 C.E.: Sheikh 'Izz Al-Din Al-Qassam the founder and leader of "*Al-Jihadiyyah*" organization martyrized in action against British security forces.

1936-1939C.E.: Palestinian resistance against foreign rule and colonization developed into a major revolution that virtually lasted until the outbreak of World War II. A new union of Palestinian political parties was formed- the Arab Higher Committee, under the chairmanship of the Mufti of Al-Quds, Al-Haj Amin Husseini.

The Committee led a six months general strike (20 April-12 October 1936) in support of Palestinian demand for a national government. Meanwhile, British troops and posts, as well as on Jewish settlements were continuously attacked. In retaliation, Jewish illegal paramilitary groups reacted in a wave of terror throughout Palestine that was accompanied with extremely oppressive British policies against the Palestinian Arabs. British military courts ordered the hanging of 58 Arab citizens in one year. In 1938, the Palestinian Revolution reached its peak controlling the Palestinian countryside and some cities; and Great Britain redeployed tens of thousands of its full-fledged Imperial troops to suppress the revolution and reoccupy Palestine.

1936 C.E.: A British Royal Commission was established to investigate the "disturbances" and its report, the "Peel Report" of July 1937 admitted the fairness of the Palestinian demands for independence, and, contrary to the previous official position, acknowledged that the "dual obligations", undertaken by the British government, were not reconcilable. The Commission recommended the partition of Palestine.

1939 C.E.: (May) Due to their two irreconcilable commitments, the British faced strong local resistance in Palestine as well as Zionist pressure in Europe. The McDonald White Paper was issued; it disclaimed any intention to create a Jewish state and rejected Arab demands for an independent Arab state in Palestine. Instead, it envisaged the termination of the mandate by 1949, with Palestine becoming an independent Arab state, but with a shared Palestinian-Jewish government. The paper, also, stipulated that Jewish immigration would end after the admittance of another 75,000 immigrants over a period of five years, and that the British government would strictly regulate the transfer of land.

1939 C.E.: Nazi persecution of Jews in Europe led to a surge in the number of Jewish immigrants from Europe to Palestine.

8 May 1942 C.E.: The Zionist Conference convened in Biltmore, the first Zionist conference to be held outside Europe. The Palestinian revolution of 1936 and the British reaction in the form of the McDonald White Paper constituted a set back to Zionist ambitions. At the same time, the emergence of the U.S. as a new superpower, after World War II, triggered the Zionists to shift their strategic alliance to the U.S.

1944 C.E.: The British High Commissioner narrowly escaped death in an ambush outside Jerusalem. Three months later, on 6 November, the British Minister of State in the Middle East was assassinated in Cairo. The two crimes were committed by the Stern Zionist terrorist group.

1945 C.E.: Zionist pressure in the U.S. increased, particularly after the declared support of many Congressmen to the Zionist position. President Harry Truman called upon the British government to open up the gates of Palestine to an additional 100,000 "homeless" European Jews.

14 November 1945 C.E.: British Foreign Secretary, Ernest Bevin, officially abolished the McDonald's White Paper of 1939.

20 April 1946 C.E.: The Anglo-American Committee of Inquiry published a report recommending the admission of another 100,000 Jewish immigrants into Palestine.

22 July 1946 C.E.: Irgun and Stern Zionist terrorist groups blew up King David Hotel in Al-Quds (Jerusalem), killing 91 people and injuring 46.

1946 C.E.: (July) The British issued a special White Paper on Terrorism in Palestine that accused the Jewish Agency of being involved in acts of terrorism along with Irgun and Stern Zionist Gangs.

29 November 1947 C.E.: The United Nations tried to settle the issue of previously held British mandated areas by a Partition plan (Resolution 181) to create a Jewish and a Palestinian State in

Palestine. It assigned 54% of Palestine, including most of the fertile and coastal areas, to the Jewish immigrants, who formed 31.7% of the population and officially owned 6.5% of the land only. All Palestinians rejected the Plan for obvious reasons, while the Jewish Agency accepted it; War erupted between the Palestinians and the Zionists.

1948-1949 C.E: By March 1949, the Zionist guerillas captured 77% of Palestine, expelled 900 thousands of the local Arabs and committed more than 34 Massacres.

14 May 1948 C.E.: The "State of Israel" was declared over the acquired lands. When we say "Israel", we refer to this land that was gained in the above background.

11 December 1948 C.E.: The U.N. General Assembly passed resolution 194 (III), which established a Conciliation Commission, headquartered in Jerusalem, to continue the functions of the Mediator and the Truce Commission. The resolution reiterated the call for an international regime for Jerusalem and demanded that "... the refugees wishing to return to their homes and live in peace with their neighbors should be permitted to do so at the earliest practicable date, and that compensation should be paid for the property of those choosing not to return, and for the loss or damage to property which, under principles of international law or in equity, should be made good by the Government or authorities responsible..."

8 December 1949 C.E.: The United Nations established the Relief and Works Agency for Palestinian Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA) to assist the hundreds of thousands of Palestinian refugees living in makeshift camps in bordering countries.

1950 C.E.: (March) "Israel" issued the "Absentee Property Law": whereby any person who on 29 Nov. 1947 was a citizen or resident of the Arab States, or a Palestinian citizen who had left his/her place of residence even to take refuge within Palestine, is classified as an "absentee". The Absentee's property would be

vested in the Custodian of Absentee Property who then "sells" it to the Development Authority authorized by the Knesset. The theft of the property of a million Arabs seized by "Israel" in 1948 was thus authorized by this "law".

1950 C.E.: (April) Unification of the West Bank and the Kingdom of Jordan; the Gaza Strip came under Egyptian administration.

1950 C.E.: (July) "Law of Return" passed by Knesset whereby any Jew, from anywhere in the world, is entitled to full "Israeli" citizenship.

20 July 1951 C.E: King Abdullah of Jordan was assassinated in Al-Quds (Jerusalem) by a nineteen-year-old Palestinian.

15 October 1953 C.E.: An "Israeli" army unit, commanded by Ariel Sharon, crossed the armistice line into the West Bank, and attacked the village of Qibya, near Al-Khaleel (Hebron), massacring 53 Palestinian civilians.

28 February 1955 C.E.: "Israel" attacked Gaza killing 39 and injuring 33.

1956 C.E.: The trio British-French-"Israeli" aggression was launched against Egypt in retaliation of the decision of Nasser; the Egyptian President, to nationalize Suez Canal. The war resulted in the occupation of Gaza Strip for the first time, but could not achieve its basic aim. During the war, the "Israeli" administration imposed a total curfew on all Arabs under its control, and committed two massacres in Kafr Qasem (Killing 49 Palestinian civilians) and Khan Yunus (Killing 250 Palestinian civilians in the first attack and 275 in the second).

1957 C.E.: By the end of this year, Fateh was established by Yasser Arafat, Khalil Al-Wazir (Abu Jihad). Later, Khalil Al-Wazir issued in Lebanon the clandestine Fateh magazine "Filisteenuna".

1958 C.E.: (February) Egypt and Syria proclaimed union and the United Arab Republic (UAR) was formed.

1961 C.E.: (August) Kamal Rif'at, a member at the Egyptian Presidential Council, contacted Palestinians in Gaza Strip, Jordan and Lebanon suggesting convening a conference to establish the Palestine Liberation Front (PLF).

1961 C.E.: (September) A Syrian military coup d'état broke up the UAR.

28 May-1 June 1964 C.E.: The first Palestinian National Council (PNC) convened, and the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) was established under the chairmanship of Ahmad Al-Shuqairi.

1 January 1965 C.E.: The Al-Asifa military wing of the Fateh movement started the armed struggle against "Israel".

13 November 1966 C.E.: "Israeli" military units attacked the village of Al-Samu', to the south of Al-Khaleel (Hebron), causing extensive damage, 18 were killed and 134 injured.

5-10 June 1967 C.E.: War erupted between six ill-equipped and ill-organized Arab armies on one side and "Israel" on the other side. The result was a catastrophic Arab defeat; after which "Israel" occupied the West Bank, Gaza Strip, Sinai and the Golan Heights. .

11 December 1967 C.E.: The Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine (PFLP) issued its first communiqué and emerged as a leftist organization to become the second largest Palestinian movement for a long time.

1968 C.E.: (January) Fateh declared its political program calling for the establishment of a democratic state in Palestine where Arabs and Jews live together without discrimination.

21 March 1968 C.E.: A group of 500 Palestinian militants, covered with a Jordanian artillery brigade managed to counter an "Israeli" massive offensive across the Jordanian borders. Within 48

hours of this victory, Fateh received 5000 applications for membership.

1968 C.E.: (July) Fateh and other resistance movements took over the PLO and amended its charter.

1969 C.E.: In February, Yasser Arafat of Fateh was selected by the Palestinian National Council (PNC) to be the Chairman of the Executive Committee of the PLO.

1970 C.E.: (September) the Jordanian army successfully waged a full-fledged military campaign to root out the Palestinian (PLO) forces. Yasser Arafat left Jordan and the Palestinian forces left Amman for the northern part of the country. By July 1971, Palestinian resistance was completely uprooted from Jordan.

6 October 1973 C.E.: War erupted with Egypt and Syria launching a surprise attack on "Israel", who was unable to effectively and immediately respond to the threat. It demanded help from the NATO and received it through an air bridge between the U.S. and "Israel". The war did not end with "Israeli" or Arab decisive defeat, though in its beginning it was in the favor of the Arabs. "Israel", however, managed to revert the equation to its favor by the end of the war. .

1-8 June 1974 C.E.: The 12th PNC passed a 10-Point Program in which the demand for a democratic secular state in all of Palestine was dropped. The stated goal becomes "an independent Palestinian state".

4 April 1975 C.E.: The start of the civil war in Lebanon.

1975 C.E.: UN Resolution 3379 defined Zionism as a form of racism and racial discrimination.

12 August 1976 C.E.: the Palestinian Refugee Camp of Tel-Al-Za tar, Lebanon, fell into the hands of the Christian Maronite militias after a two-month siege that killed 4280 Palestinians.

1977 C.E.: The right wing Likud party came to power in "Israel" for the first time, ending Labor party's long dominance of the "Israeli" polity.

14-21 March 1978 C.E.: "Israel" launched an offensive against the Palestinian resistance bases in Lebanon, but could not achieve its aims, resistance continued.

17 September 1978 C.E.: Peace treaty was signed between Egypt and "Israel", known as Camp David Accords.

30 July 1980 C.E.: "Israeli" Knesset adopted the Jerusalem Basic Law, "officially" annexing the eastern part, occupied in 1967, to "Israel".

1981 C.E.: (June) "Israeli" aircrafts bombed the Iraqi nuclear reactor.

6 October 1981 C.E.: President Sadat of Egypt was assassinated during a military parade celebrating the 1973 October War. The main motive behind the assassination was anger over the peace treaty which he signed with "Israel" in 1978.

1981 C.E.: (December) The Golan Heights, an area of 500 squared miles (1150 km^2), was annexed to "Israel".

1982 C.E.: (Summer) Another "Israeli" offensive was launched in June by Ariel Sharon (then Defense Minister) on Palestinian forces in Lebanon. The offensive resulted in massive civilian Lebanese and Palestinian losses (19,000 killed and 80,000), and the PLO was forced to leave Lebanon in August to spare the lives of innocent civilians targeted by the "Israeli" army. After the departure of the PLO, the way was cleared for the "Israeli" army to target the Palestinians of Lebanon who lost their military shield.

16-18 September 1982 C.E.: One of the worse massacres after WWII was committed in Sabra and Shatila refugee camps killing around 3297 Palestinians by the local Maronite militia under the protection and logistic support of the "Israeli" forces. Sharon was held responsible by the "Israeli" fact-finding Committee (Kahan

Committee), and was forced to leave office, though he did not face any criminal charges.

1 October 1985 C.E.: "Israel" bombed the PLO headquarters in Tunisia killing more than 50 people.

1987-1993 C.E.: The First Palestinian Uprising, intifada, started in 9 December 1987, with Civil Disobedience as its main resistance activity. The intifada ended after six years during which 1540 Palestinians were killed by "Israeli" forces, 130,000 wounded and 116,000 imprisoned for different periods.

14 December 1987 C.E.: The Islamic Resistance Movement, Hamas, issued its first military communiqué declaring itself as the military wing of the Muslim Brotherhood.

1988 C.E.: (January) "Israel" announced that the intifada will be met with an "Iron Fist Policy", which involved severe beating (termed the "breaking of bones"), mass arrests and detentions, deportations, home demolitions, destruction of private property, and the use of live ammunition and rubber bullets.

16 April 1988 C.E.: Khalil Al-Wazir, the key military commander of Fateh, was assassinated in his house in Tunisia by a commando unit from the "Israeli" intelligence (Mossad).

1988 C.E.:(May) Unified Leadership of the Uprising (UNLU) declared national disobedience in Palestine.

31 July 1988 C.E.: King Hussein announced disengagement with the West Bank.

15 November 1988C.E.: The Palestinian National Council (PNC) declared in its 19th conference in Algiers the INDEPENDENCE OF PALESTINE. One day after this declaration, 20 countries recognized the State of Palestine. In the same meeting, the PNC recognized UN Security Council resolutions 181 and 242.

1988 C.E.: (December) After one year of the intifada: 318 Palestinians were killed, 20,000 wounded, 15,000 arrested, 12,000

jailed. 34 deported, and 140 houses demolished. 8 "Israelis" were killed (6 civilians, 2 soldiers).

1989 C.E.: The Soviet Union allowed its Jewish citizens to migrate to "Israel". The flow of Soviet Jews continued throughout the decade, in the largest immigration wave in the history of "Israel". By May 2000, the number of immigrants from the former USSR reached one million.

2 August 1990 C.E.: Iraqi forces invaded Kuwait marking the beginning of Gulf War II which polarized and split the Arab countries and severely harmed the Palestinian cause.

8 October 1990 C.E.: Jewish extremist groups tried to lay the foundation for the Temple they aspired to establish in place of Al Aqsa Mosque, 5000 Palestinians gathered to defend the mosque, and "Israeli" army opened fire indiscriminately killing 21 and wounding 150 Palestinians. .

30 October 1991 C.E.: Middle East Peace conference convened in Madrid under the guardianship of the U.S. and U.S.S.R, with delegations from Egypt, Syria, Jordan-Palestine, Lebanon, "Israel", the U.N. and the E.U.

17 December 1992 C.E.: "Israel" deported 415 Palestinian freedom fighters, 385 from the Islamic Resistance Movement (Hamas) and 30 from the Islamic Jihad.

1993 C.E.: During the last stages of the intifada, the PLO and "Israel" explored the possibility of a peace agreement, the secret negotiations in Oslo ended with the initial Oslo agreement of 1993. The detailed agreement was signed in Washington 13 September 1993.

25 February 1994 C.E.: An "Israeli" settler opened fire at worshippers in Al-Ibrahimi Mosque, the total death toll, after the clashes that followed the attack, reached 29 martyrs and 350 wounded.

1994 C.E.: (July) Arafat returned to Gaza establishing the headquarters of his authority there.

4 May 1994 C.E.: the PLO and "Israel" signed Agreement on the Preparatory Transfer of Powers and Responsibilities, first in Cairo, then, in details, in Gaza.

26 October 1994 C.E.: Jordan signed a peace treaty with "Israel" in Wadi Araba.

28 September 1995 C.E.: The PLO and "Israel" signed in Washington, D.C. the "Israeli"-Palestinian Interim Agreement on the West Bank and the Gaza Strip.

26 October 1995 C.E.: The secretary general of the Islamic Jihad, Fethi Al-Sheqaqi, was assassinated by the "Israeli" Mossad in Malta and was succeeded by Dr. Ramadan Abdullah Shallah.

4 November 1995 C.E.: "Israeli" Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin was assassinated in Tel Aviv by an "Israeli" extremist; the motive was protest against the peace agreements he signed with the Palestinians.

5 January 1996 C.E.: The legendary leader of Al-Qassam brigades, Yahya Ayyash, known as "The Engineer", was assassinated by the "Israeli" Internal Intelligence (Shabak).

20 January 1996 C.E.: General elections were held in the areas handed to the Palestinian National Authority, 88 representatives were elected for the legislative council and Yasser Arafat was confirmed as Chairman of the Authority. The Islamic political movements. Hamas and Jihad, along with 11 other national movements, boycotted the elections.

24 September 1996 C.E.: The "Israeli" government opened a tunnel near *Al-Haram Al-Sharif* in the Old City in East Al-Quds (Jerusalem). The "Israeli" army uses tanks and gun helicopters against both Palestinian police and civilians. The events resulted in killing 62 Palestinians and injuring 1500, as well as killing 15 "Israeli" soldiers.

15 January 1997 C.E.: The Palestine Authority and "Israel" concluded the Protocol Concerning the Redeployment in Hebron.

23 October 1998 C.E.: The Wye River Memorandum was signed by Chairman Arafat and Prime Minister Netanyahu in a ceremony at the White House that was witnessed by President Clinton and King Hussein.

17 May 1999 C.E.: The Labor party came back to power in "Israel" with Ehud Barak as the Prime Minister. Hopes of the Palestinian officials to reach a final settlement were revived again.

July 2000 C.E.: Peace talks reached a deadlock after the failure of two-week negotiations at Camp David that were facilitated by the American President Bill Clinton. In these talks Ehud Barak, told Arafat that: "the concessions he gave were the most he had and the most that the Palestinians can get", but this "most" did not meet the Palestinian minimum demands. Palestinian public was very frustrated by this proposal, which it considered unfair and humiliating. After eight years of negotiations, Palestinians realized that they got almost nothing.

28 September 2000 C.E.: Ariel Sharon, the leader of the opposition party, entered Al-Aqsa Mosque, the Muslim holiest shrine in Palestine and the Third holy Mosque of Islam. Protected by around 2000 "Israeli" soldiers, Sharon's visit to the holy area of the Mosque was an explicit and rude challenge to the feelings of the Muslims worldwide, especially the Palestinians who were frustrated by the failure of Camp David over the sensitive issue of Al-Quds (Jerusalem). The **intifada Al-Aqsa** erupted in response.

6 February 2001 C.E.: Ariel Sharon, a retired "Israeli" general who fought in the five Arab-"Israeli" wars and led one of them, and an extremist who led several massacres of which the most infamous was Sabra and Shatila in 1982, became the "Israeli" Prime Minister by a decisive vote. He came to power with an unrealistic military program to guarantee the security of "Israel" and bring the Palestinians to their knees in 100 days. He failed.

2002 C.E: "Israeli" forces launched a large-scale campaign to reoccupy the West Bank and some parts of Gaza strip, that led to high causalities among civilians. But the intifada did not end as Sharon planned and hoped. Two years after the intifada, the Palestinians were still in their quest for a home...a free one.

II. Documents*

The Balfour Declaration

Foreign Office

November 2nd, 1917

Dear Lord Rothschild,

I have much pleasure in conveying to you, on behalf of His Majesty's Government, the following declaration of sympathy with Jewish Zionist aspirations which has been submitted to, and approved by, the Cabinet.

> "His Majesty's Government view with favour the establishment in Palestine of a national home for the Jewish people, and will use their best endeavours to facilitate the achievement of this object, it being clearly understood that nothing shall be done which may prejudice the civil and religious rights of existing non-Jewish communities in Palestine, or the rights and political status enjoyed by Jews in any other country."

I should be grateful if you would bring this declaration to the knowledge of the Zionist Federation.

Yours sincerely,
Arthur James Balfour

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* This part presents a sample of documents relevant to the Palestinan-Isreali conflict. Other documents were reviewed within the text of the book, especially on chapter seven of "Peace projects". However, for further reviewing of historical document, kindly check:
http://www.palestine-net.com/politics/index.html#docs
http://www.un.org/Depts/dpa/ngo/history.html
http://domino.un.org/unispal.nsf/vMaps

Resolution 181 (II)

Future government of Palestine

General Assembly

A/RES/181(II)(A-B)
29 November 1947A\

B 1/

The General Assembly,

Having met in special session at the request of the mandatory Power to constitute and instruct a special committee to prepare for the consideration of the question of the future government of Palestine at the second regular session;

Having constituted a Special Committee and instructed it to investigate all questions and issues relevant to the problem of Palestine, and to prepare proposals for the solution of the problem, and

Having received and examined the report of the Special Committee (document A/364)1/ including a number of unanimous recommendations and a plan of partition with economic union approved by the majority of the Special Committee,

Considers that the present situation in Palestine is one which is likely to impair the general welfare and friendly relations among nations:

Takes note of the declaration by the mandatory Power that it plans to complete its evacuation of Palestine by 1 August 1948;

Recommends to the United Kingdom, as the mandatory Power for Palestine, and to all other Members of the United Nations the adoption and implementation, with regard to the future government

of Palestine. of the Plan of Partition with Economic Union set out below:

Requests that

(a) The Security Council take the necessary measures as provided for in the plan for its implementation;

(b) The Security Council consider, if circumstances during the transitional period require such consideration, whether the situation in Palestine constitutes a threat to the peace. If it decides that such a threat exists, and in order to maintain international peace and security, the Security Council should supplement the authorization of the General Assembly by taking measures, under Articles 39 and 41 of the Charter, to empower the United Nations Commission, as provided in this resolution, to exercise in Palestine the functions which are assigned to it by this resolution;

(c) The Security Council determine as a threat to the peace, breach of the peace or act of aggression, in accordance with Article 39 of the Charter, any attempt to alter by force the settlement envisaged by this resolution;

(d) The Trusteeship Council be informed of the responsibilities envisaged for it in this plan;

Calls upon the inhabitants of Palestine to take such steps as may be necessary on their part to put this plan into effect;

Appeals to all Governments and all peoples to refrain from taking action which might hamper or delay the carrying out of these recommendations, and

Authorizes the Secretary-General to reimburse travel and subsistence expenses of the members of the Commission referred to in Part I, Section B, paragraph 1 below, on such basis and in such form as he may determine most appropriate in the circumstances, and to provide the Commission with the necessary

staff to assist in carrying out the functions assigned to the Commission by the General Assembly.

B 2/

The General Assembly

Authorizes the Secretary-General to draw from the Working Capital Fund a sum not to exceed $2,000,000 for the purposes set forth in the last paragraph of the resolution on the future government of Palestine.

Hundred and twenty-eighth plenary meeting

29 November 1947

[At its hundred and twenty-eighth plenary meeting on 29 November 1947 the General Assembly, in accordance with the terms of the above resolution [181 A], elected the following members of the United Nations Commission on Palestine: Bolivia, Czechoslovakia, Denmark, Panama and Philippines.]

The Declaration of the Establishment of the State of Israel May 14, 1948

On May 14, 1948, on the day in which the British Mandate over a Palestine expired, the Jewish People's Council gathered at the Tel Aviv Museum, and approved the following proclamation, declaring the establishment of the State of Israel. The new state was recognized that night at 11:00 AM Israel time by the United States and three days later by the USSR.

ERETZ-ISRAEL - the Land of Israel - was the birthplace of the Jewish people. Here their spiritual, religious and political identity was shaped. Here they first attained to statehood, created cultural values of national and universal significance and gave to the world the eternal Book of Books.

After being forcibly exiled from their land, the people kept faith with it throughout their Dispersion and never ceased to pray and hope for their return to it and for the restoration in it of their political freedom.

Impelled by this historic and traditional attachment, Jews strove in every successive generation to re-establish themselves in their ancient homeland. In recent decades they returned in their masses. Pioneers, *ma'pilim* - immigrants coming to Eretz-Israel in defiance of restrictive legislation and defenders, they made deserts bloom, revived the Hebrew language, built villages and towns, and created a thriving community controlling its own economy and culture, loving peace but knowing how to defend itself, bringing the blessings of progress to all the country's inhabitants, and aspiring towards independent nationhood.

In the year 5657 (1897), at the summons of the spiritual father of the Jewish State, Theodore Herzl, the First Zionist Congress

convened and proclaimed the right of the Jewish people to national rebirth in its own country.

This right was recognized in the Balfour Declaration of the 2nd November, 1917, and re-affirmed in the Mandate of the League of Nations which, in particular, gave international sanction to the historic connection between the Jewish people and Eretz-Israel and to the right of the Jewish people to rebuild its National Home.

The catastrophe which recently befell the Jewish people - the massacre of millions of Jews in Europe - was another clear demonstration of the urgency of solving the problem of its homelessness by re-establishing in Eretz-Israel the Jewish State, which would open the gates of the homeland wide to every Jew and confer upon the Jewish people the status of a fully privileged member of the comity of nations.

Survivors of the Nazi holocaust in Europe, as well as Jews from other parts of the world, continued to migrate to Eretz-Israel, undaunted by difficulties, restrictions and dangers, and never ceased to assert their right to a life of dignity, freedom and honest toil in their national homeland.

In the Second World War, the Jewish community of this country contributed its full share to the struggle of the freedom-and-peace-loving nations against the forces of Nazi wickedness and, by the blood of its soldiers and its war effort, gained the right to be reckoned among the peoples who founded the United Nations.

On the 29th November, 1947, the United Nations General Assembly passed a resolution calling for the establishment of a Jewish State in Eretz-Israel; the General Assembly required the inhabitants of Eretz-Israel to take such steps as were necessary on their part for the implementation of that resolution. This recognition by the United Nations of the right of the Jewish people to establish their State is irrevocable.

This right is the natural right of the Jewish people to be masters of their own fate, like all other nations, in their own sovereign State.

ACCORDINGLY WE, MEMBERS OF THE PEOPLE'S COUNCIL, REPRESENTATIVES OF THE JEWISH COMMUNITY OF ERETZ-ISRAEL AND OF THE ZIONIST MOVEMENT, ARE HERE ASSEMBLED ON THE DAY OF THE TERMINATION OF THE BRITISH MANDATE OVER ERETZ-ISRAEL AND, BY VIRTUE OF OUR NATURAL AND HISTORIC RIGHT AND ON THE STRENGTH OF THE RESOLUTION OF THE UNITED NATIONS GENERAL ASSEMBLY, HEREBY DECLARE THE ESTABLISHMENT OF A JEWISH STATE IN ERETZ-ISRAEL, TO BE KNOWN AS THE STATE OF ISRAEL.

WE DECLARE that, with effect from the moment of the termination of the Mandate being tonight, the eve of Sabbath, the 6th Iyar, 5708 (15th May, 1948), until the establishment of the elected, regular authorities of the State in accordance with the Constitution which shall be adopted by the Elected Constituent Assembly not later than the 1st October 1948, the People's Council shall act as a Provisional Council of State, and its executive organ, the People's Administration, shall be the Provisional Government of the Jewish State, to be called "Israel".

THE STATE OF ISRAEL will be open for Jewish immigration and for the Ingathering of the Exiles; it will foster the development of the country for the benefit of all its inhabitants; it will be based on freedom, justice and peace as envisaged by the prophets of Israel; it will ensure complete equality of social and political rights to all its inhabitants irrespective of religion, race or sex; it will guarantee freedom of religion, conscience, language, education and culture; it will safeguard the Holy Places of all religions; and it will be faithful to the principles of the Charter of the United Nations.

THE STATE OF ISRAEL is prepared to cooperate with the agencies and representatives of the United Nations in implementing the resolution of the General Assembly of the 29th November, 1947, and will take steps to bring about the economic union of the whole of Eretz-Israel.

WE APPEAL to the United Nations to assist the Jewish people in the building-up of its State and to receive the State of Israel into the comity of nations.

WE APPEAL - in the very midst of the onslaught launched against us now for months - to the Arab inhabitants of the State of Israel to preserve peace and participate in the upbuilding of the State on the basis of full and equal citizenship and due representation in all its provisional and permanent institutions.

WE EXTEND our hand to all neighboring states and their peoples in an offer of peace and good neighborliness, and appeal to them to establish bonds of cooperation and mutual help with the sovereign Jewish people settled in its own land. The State of Israel is prepared to do its share in a common effort for the advancement of the entire Middle East.

WE APPEAL to the Jewish people throughout the Diaspora to rally round the Jews of Eretz-Israel in the tasks of immigration and upbuilding and to stand by them in the great struggle for the realization of the age-old dream - the redemption of Israel.

PLACING OUR TRUST IN THE ALMIGHTY, WE AFFIX OUR SIGNATURES TO THIS PROCLAMATION AT THIS SESSION OF THE PROVISIONAL COUNCIL OF STATE, ON THE SOIL OF THE HOMELAND, IN THE CITY OF TEL-AVIV, ON THIS SABBATH EVE, THE 5TH DAY OF IYAR, 5708 (14TH MAY,1948).

David Ben-Gurion

Daniel Auster	*Herzl Vardi*	*David Zvi Pinkas*
Mordekhai Bentov	*Rachel Cohen*	*Aharon Zisling*
Yitzchak Ben Zvi	*Rabbi Kalman*	*Moshe Kolodny*
Eliyahu Berligne	*Kahana*	*Eliezer Kaplan*
Fritz Bernstein	*Saadia Kobashi*	*Abraham Katznelson*
Rabbi Wolf Gold	*Rabbi Yitzchak Meir*	*Felix Rosenblueth*
Meir Grabovsky	*Levin*	*David Remez*
Yitzchak Gruenbaum	*Meir David*	*Berl Repetur*

Dr. Abraham
Granovsky
Eliyahu Dobkin
Meir Wilner-Kovner
Zerach Wahrhaftig

Loewenstein
Zvi Luria
Golda Myerson
Nachum Nir
Zvi Segal
Rabbi Yehuda Leib
Hacohen Fishman

Mordekhai Shattner
Ben Zion Sternberg
Bekhor Shitreet
Moshe Shapira
Moshe Shertok

Published in the *Official Gazette*, No. 1 of the 5th, Iyar, 5708 (14th May, 1948).

302 (IV), Assistance to Palestine Refugees 1/ (Establishing the UNRWA)

United Nations - A

General Assembly

A/RES 302 (IV) 8 December 1949

The General Assembly,

Recalling its resolutions 212 (III) 2/ of 19 November 1948 and 194 (III) 3/ of 11 December 1948, affirming in particular the provisions of paragraph 11 of the latter resolutions, *Having examined* with appreciation the first interim report 4/ of the United Nations Economic Survey Mission for the Middle East and the report 5/ of the Secretary-General on assistance to Palestine refugees,

1. *Expresses* its appreciation to the Governments which have generously responded to the appeal embodied in its resolution 212 (III), and to the appeal of the Secretary-General, to contribute in kind or in funds to the alleviation of the conditions of starvation and distress among the Palestine refugees;

2. *Expresses* also its gratitude to the International Committee of the Red Cross, to the League of Red Cross Societies and to the American Friends Service Committee for the contribution they have made to this humanitarian cause by discharging, in the face of great difficulties, the responsibility they voluntarily assumed for the distribution of relief supplies and the general care of the refugees; and welcomes the assurance they have given the Secretary-General that they will continue their co-operation with the United Nations until the end of March 1950 on a mutually acceptable basis;

3. *Commends* the United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund for the important contribution which it has made

towards the United Nations program of assistance; and commends those specialized agencies which have rendered assistance in their respective fields, in particular the World Health Organization, the United nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization and the International Refugee Organization;

4. *Expresses* its thanks to the numerous religious, charitable and humanitarian organizations which have materially assisted in bringing relief to Palestine refugees;

5. *Recognizes* that, without prejudice to the provisions of paragraph 11 of General Assembly resolution 194 (III) of 11 December 1948, continued assistance for the relief of the Palestine refugees is necessary to prevent conditions of starvation and distress among them and to further conditions of peace and stability, and that constructive measures should be undertaken at an early date with a view to the termination of international assistance for relief;

6. *Considers* that, subject to the provisions of paragraph 9(d) of the present resolution, the equivalent of approximately $33,700,000 will be required for direct relief and works programs for the period 1 January to 31 December 1950 of which the equivalent of $20,200,000 is required for direct relief and $13,500,000 for works programs; that the equivalent of approximately $21,200,000 will be required for works programs from 1 January to 30 June 1951, all inclusive of administrative expenses; and that direct relief should be terminated not later than 31 December 1950 unless otherwise determined by the General Assembly at its fifth regular session;

7. *Establishes* the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East:

(a) To carry out in collaboration with local governments the direct relief and works programs as recommended by the Economic Survey Mission;

(b) To consult with the interested Near Eastern Governments concerning measures to be taken by them preparatory to the

time when international assistance for relief and works projects is no longer available;

8. *Establishes* an Advisory Commission consisting of representatives of France, Turkey, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland and the United States of America, with power to add not more than three additional members from contributing Governments, to advise and assist the Director of the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East in the execution of the program; the Director and the Advisory Commission shall consult with each near Eastern Government concerned in the selection, planning and execution of projects;

9. *Requests* the Secretary-General to appoint the Director of the United.Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East in consultation with the Governments represented on the Advisory Commission;

(a) The Director shall be the chief executive officer of the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East responsible to the General Assembly for the operation of the program;

(b) The Director shall select and appoint his staff in accordance with general arrangements made in agreement with the Secretary-General, including such of the staff rules and regulations of the United Nations as the Director and the Secretary-General shall agree are applicable, and to the extent possible utilize the facilities and assistance of the Secretary-General

(c) The Director shall, in consultation with the Secretary-General and the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions, establish financial regulations for the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East;

(d) Subject to the financial regulations established pursuant to clause (c) of the present paragraph, the Director, in consultation with the Advisory Commission, shall apportion available funds between direct relief and works projects in their discretion, in the event that the estimates in paragraph 6 require revision;

10. *Requests* the Director to convene the Advisory Commission at the earliest practicable date for the purpose of developing plans for the organization and administration of the program, and of adopting rules of procedure;

11. *Continues* the United Nations Relief for Palestine Refugees as established under General Assembly resolution 212 (III) until 1 April 1950, or until such date thereafter as the transfer referred to in paragraph 12 is affected, and requests the Secretary-General in consultation with the operating agencies to continue the endeavor to reduce the numbers of rations by progressive stages in the light of the findings and recommendations of the Economic Survey Mission;

12. *Instructs* the Secretary-General to transfer to the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East the assets and liabilities of the United Nations Relief for Palestine Refugees by 1 April 1950, or at such date as may be agreed by him and the Director of the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East;

13. *Urges* all Members of the United Nations and non-members to make voluntary contributions in funds or in kind to ensure that the amount of supplies and funds required is obtained for each period of the program as set out in paragraph 6; contributions in funds may be made in currencies other than the United States dollar in so far as the program can be carried out in such currencies;

14. *Authorizes* the Secretary-General, in consultation with the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions, to advance funds deemed to be available for this purpose and not

exceeding $5.000,000 from the Working Capital Fund to finance operations pursuant to the present resolution, such sum to be repaid not later than 31 December 1950 from the voluntary governmental contributions requested under paragraph 13 above;

15. *Authorizes* the Secretary-General, in consultation with the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions, to negotiate with the International Refugee Organization for an interest-free loan in an amount not to exceed the equivalent of $2.800.000 to finance the program subject to mutually satisfactory conditions for repayment;

16. *Authorizes* the Secretary-General to continue the Special Fund established under General Assembly resolution 212 (III) and to make withdra Wals therefrom for the operation of the United Nations Relief for Palestine Refugees and, upon the request of the Director, for the operations of the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East;

17. *Calls upon* the Governments concerned to accord to the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East the privileges, immunities, exemptions and facilities which have been granted to the United Nations Relief for Palestine Refugees, together with all other privileges, immunities, exemptions and facilities necessary for the fulfillment of its functions;

18. *Urges* the United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund, the International Refugee Organization, the World Health Organization, the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, the Food and Agriculture Organization and other appropriate agencies and private groups and organizations, in consultation with the Director of the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East, to furnish assistance within the framework of the program;

19. *Requests* the Director of the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East:

(a) To appoint a representative to attend the meeting of the Technical Assistance Board as observer so that the technical assistance activities of the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East may be coordinated with the technical assistance programs of the United Nations and specialized agencies referred to in Economic and Social Council resolution 222 (IX) A 6/ of 15 August 1949;

(b) To place at the disposal of the Technical Assistance Board full information concerning any technical assistance work which may be done by the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East, in order that it may be included in the reports submitted by the Technical Assistance Board to the Technical Assistance committee of the Economic and Social Council;

20. *Directs* the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East to consult with the United Nations Conciliation Commission for Palestine in the best interests of their respective tasks, with particular reference to paragraph 11 of General Assembly resolution 194 (III) of 11 December 1948;

21. *Requests* the Director to submit to the General Assembly of the United Nations an annual report on the work of the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East, including an audit of funds, and invites him to submit to the Secretary-General such other reports as the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East may wish to bring to the attention of Members of the United Nations, or its appropriate organs;

22. *Instructs* the United Nations Conciliation Commission for Palestine to transmit the final report of the Economic Survey Mission, with such comments as it may wish to make, to the Secretary-General for transmission to the Members of the United Nations and to the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East.

Political Program Adopted at the 12th Session of the Palestine National Council

Cairo, 8 June 1974

The Palestine National Council,

On the basis of the Palestine National Charter and the Political Program drawn up at the eleventh session, held from 6-12 January 1997; and from its belief that it is impossible for a permanent and just peace to be established in the area unless our Palestinian people recover from all their national rights and, first and foremost, their rights to return and to self-determination on the whole of the soil of their homeland; and in the light of a study of the new political circumstances that have come into existence in the period between the Council's last and present sessions, resolves the following:

1. To reaffirm the Palestine Liberation Organization's previous attitude to Resolution 242, which obliterates the national right of our people and deals with the cause of our people as a problem of refugees. The Council therefore refuses to have anything to do with this resolution at any level, Arab or international, including the Geneva Conference.

2. The Palestine Liberation Organization will employ all means, and first and foremost armed struggle, to liberate Palestinian territory and to establish the independent combatant national authority for the people over every part of Palestinian territory that is liberated. This will require further changes being effected in the balance of power in favor of our people and their struggle.

3. The Liberation Organization will struggle against any proposal for a Palestinian entity the price of which is recognition, peace, secure frontiers, renunciation of national rights, and the

deprival of our people of their right to return and their right to self-determination on the soil of their homeland.

4. Any step taken towards liberation is a step towards the realization of the Liberation Organization's strategy of establishing the democratic Palestinian State specified in the resolutions of the previous Palestinian National Councils.

5. Struggle along with the Jordanian national forces to establish a Jordanian-Palestinian national front whose aim will be to set up in Jordan a democratic national authority in close contact with the Palestinian entity that is established through the struggle.

6. The Liberation Organization will struggle to establish unity in struggle between the two peoples and between all the forces of the Arab liberation movement that are in agreement on this program.

7. In the light of this program, the Liberation Organization will struggle to strengthen national unity and to raise it to the level where it will be able to perform its national duties and tasks.

8. Once it is established, the Palestinian national authority will strive to achieve a union of the confrontation countries, with the aim of completing the liberation of all Palestinian territory, and as a step along the road to comprehensive Arab unity.

9. The Liberation Organization will strive to strengthen its solidarity with the socialist countries, and with the forces of liberation and progress throughout the world, with the aim of frustrating all the schemes of Zionism, reaction and imperialism.

10. In light of this program, the leadership of the revolution will determine the tactics which will serve and make possible the realization of thee objectives.

The Executive Committee of the Palestine Liberation Organization will make every effort to implement this program. and should a situation arise affecting the destiny and the future of the Palestinian people, the National Assembly will be convened in extraordinary session.

Declaration of Independence
November 15th, 1988

In the name of God, the Compassionate, the Merciful

Palestine, the land of the three monotheistic faiths, is where the Palestinian Arab people was born, on which it grew, developed and excelled. Thus the Palestinian Arab people ensured for itself an everlasting union between itself, its land, and its history.

Resolute throughout that history, the Palestinian Arab people forged its national identity, rising even to unimagined levels in its defense, as invasion, the design of others, and the appeal special to Palestine's ancient and luminous place on the eminence where powers and civilizations are joined. All this intervened thereby to deprive the people of its political independence. Yet the undying connection between Palestine and its people secured for the land its character, and for the people its national genius.

Nourished by an unfolding series of civilizations and cultures, inspired by a heritage rich in variety and kind, the Palestinian Arab people added to its stature by consolidating a union between itself and its patrimonial Land. The call went out from Temple, Church, and Mosque that to praise the Creator, to celebrate compassion and peace was indeed the message of Palestine. And in generation after generation, the Palestinian Arab people gave of itself unsparingly in the valiant battle for liberation and homeland. For what has been the unbroken chain of our people's rebellions but the heroic embodiment of our will for national independence. And so the people was sustained in the struggle to stay and to prevail.

When in the course of modern times a new order of values was declared with norms and values fair for all, it was the Palestinian Arab people that had been excluded from the destiny of all other peoples by a hostile array of local and foreign powers. Yet again

had unaided justice been revealed as insufficient to drive the world's history along its preferred course.

And it was the Palestinian people, already wounded in its body, that was submitted to yet another type of occupation over which floated that falsehood that "Palestine was a land without people." This notion was foisted upon some in the world, whereas in Article 22 of the Covenant of the League of Nations (1919) and in the Treaty of Lausanne (1923), the community of nations had recognized that all the Arab territories, including Palestine, of the formerly Ottoman provinces, were to have granted to them their freedom as provisionally independent nations.

Despite the historical injustice inflicted on the Palestinian Arab people resulting in their dispersion and depriving them of their right to self-determination, following upon U.N. General Assembly Resolution 181 (1947), which partitioned Palestine into two states, one Arab, one Jewish, yet it is this Resolution that still provides those conditions of international legitimacy that ensure the right of the Palestinian Arab people to sovereignty.

By stages, the occupation of Palestine and parts of other Arab territories by Israeli forces, the willed dispossession and expulsion from their ancestral homes of the majority of Palestine's civilian inhabitants, was achieved by organized terror; those Palestinians who remained, as a vestige subjugated in its homeland, were persecuted and forced to endure the destruction of their national life.

Thus were principles of international legitimacy violated. Thus were the Charter of the United Nations and its Resolutions disfigured, for they had recognized the Palestinian Arab people's national rights, including the right of Return, the right to independence, the right to sovereignty over territory and homeland.

In Palestine and on its perimeters, in exile distant and near, the Palestinian Arab people never faltered and never abandoned its conviction in its rights of Return and independence. Occupation,

massacres and dispersion achieved no gain in the unabated Palestinian consciousness of self and political identity, as Palestinians went forward with their destiny, undeterred and unbowed. And from out of the long years of trial in ever-mounting struggle, the Palestinian political identity emerged further consolidated and confirmed. And the collective Palestinian national will forged for itself a political embodiment, the Palestine Liberation Organization, its sole, legitimate representative recognized by the world community as a whole, as well as by related regional and international institutions. Standing on the very rock of conviction in the Palestinian people's inalienable rights, and on the ground of Arab national consensus and of international legitimacy, the PLO led the campaigns of its great people, molded into unity and powerful resolve, one and indivisible in its triumphs, even as it suffered massacres and confinement within and without its home. And so Palestinian resistance was clarified and raised into the forefront of Arab and world awareness, as the struggle of the Palestinian Arab people achieved unique prominence among the world's liberation movements in the modern era.

The massive national uprising, the intifada, now intensifying in cumulative scope and power on occupied Palestinian territories, as well as the unflinching resistance of the refugee camps outside the homeland, have elevated awareness of the Palestinian truth and right into still higher realms of comprehension and actuality. Now at last the curtain has been dropped around a whole epoch of prevarication and negation. The intifada has set siege to the mind of official Israel, which has for too long relied exclusively upon myth and terror to deny Palestinian existence altogether. Because of the intifada and its revolutionary irreversible impulse, the history of Palestine has, therefore, arrived at a decisive juncture.

Whereas the Palestinian people reaffirms most definitively its inalienable rights in the land of its patrimony:

Now by virtue of natural, historical and legal rights, and the sacrifices of successive generations who gave of themselves in defense of the freedom and independence of their homeland;

In pursuance of Resolutions adopted by Arab Summit Conferences and relying on the authority bestowed by international legitimacy as embodied in the Resolutions of the United Nations Organization since 1947;

And in exercise by the Palestinian Arab people of its rights to self-determination, political independence and sovereignty over its territory.

The Palestine National Council, in the name of God, and in the name of the Palestinian Arab people, hereby proclaims the establishment of the State of Palestine on our Palestinian territory with its capital Jerusalem (Al-Quds Ash-Sharif).

The State of Palestine is the state of Palestinians wherever they may be. The state is for them to enjoy in it their collective national and cultural identity, theirs to pursue in it a complete equality of rights. In it will be safeguarded their political and religious convictions and their human dignity by means of a parliamentary democratic system of governance, itself based on freedom of expression and the freedom to form parties. The rights of minorities will duly be respected by the majority, as minorities must abide by decisions of the majority. Governance will be based on principles of social justice, equality and non-discrimination in public rights of men or women, on grounds of race, religion, color or sex, and the aegis of a constitution which ensures the rule of law and an independent judiciary. Thus, shall these principles allow no departure from Palestine's age-old spiritual and civilizational heritage of tolerance and religious coexistence.

The State of Palestine is an Arab state, an integral and indivisible part of the Arab nation, at one with that nation in heritage and civilization, with it also in its aspiration for liberation, progress, democracy and unity. The State of Palestine affirms its

obligation to abide by the Charter of the League of Arab States, whereby the coordination of the Arab states with each other shall be strengthened. It calls upon Arab compatriots to consolidate and enhance the reality of state, to mobilize potential, and to intensify efforts whose goal is to end Israeli occupation.

The State of Palestine proclaims its commitment to the principles and purposes of the United Nations, and to the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. It proclaims its commitment as well to the principles and policies of the Non-Aligned Movement.

It, further, announces itself to be a peace-loving State, in adherence to the principles of peaceful co-existence. It will join with all states and peoples in order to assure a permanent peace based upon justice and the respect of rights so that humanity's potential for well-being may be assured, an earnest competition for excellence may be maintained, and in which confidence in the future will eliminate fear for those who are just and for whom justice is the only recourse.

In the context of its struggle for peace in the land of Love and Peace, the State of Palestine calls upon the United Nations to bear special responsibility for the Palestinian Arab people and its homeland. It calls upon all peace-and freedom-loving peoples and states to assist it in the attainment of its objectives, to provide it with security, to alleviate the tragedy of its people, and to help it terminate Israel's occupation of the Palestinian territories.

The State of Palestine herewith declares that it believes in the settlement of regional and international disputes by peaceful means, in accordance with the U.N. Charter and resolutions. With prejudice to its natural right to defend its territorial integrity and independence, it therefore rejects the threat or use of force, violence and terrorism against its territorial integrity or political independence, as it also rejects their use against territorial integrity of other states.

Therefore, on this day unlike all others, November 15, 1988, as we stand at the threshold of a new dawn, in all honor and modesty we humbly bow to the sacred spirits of our fallen ones, Palestinian and Arab, by the purity of whose sacrifice for the homeland our sky has been illuminated and our Land given life. Our hearts are lifted up and irradiated by the light emanating from the much blessed intifada, from those who have endured and have fought the fight of the camps, of dispersion, of exile, from those who have borne the standard for freedom, our children, our aged, our youth, our prisoners, detainees and wounded, all those ties to our sacred soil are confirmed in camp, village, and town. We render special tribute to that brave Palestinian Woman, guardian of sustenance and Life, keeper of our people's perennial flame. To the souls of our sainted martyrs, the whole of our Palestinian Arab people that our struggle shall be continued until the occupation ends, and the foundation of our sovereignty and independence shall be fortified accordingly.

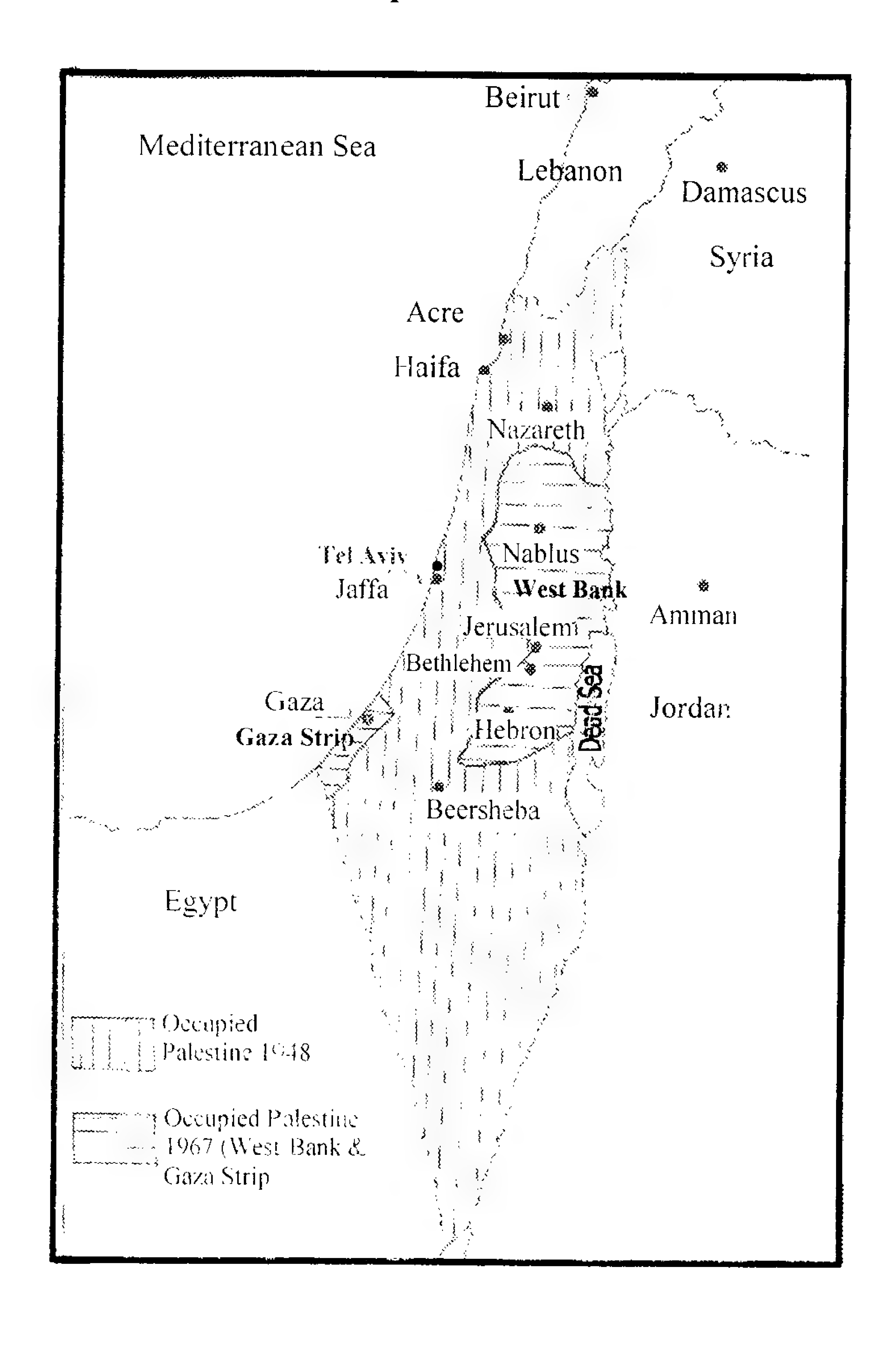
Therefore, we call upon our great people to rally to the banner of Palestine, to cherish and defend it, so that it may forever be the symbol of our freedom and dignity in that homeland, which is a homeland for the free, now and always.

In the name of God, the Compassionate, the Merciful:

> *﴾Say: 'O God, Master of the Kingdom,Thou givest the Kingdom to whom Thou wilt, and seizes the Kingdom from whom Thou wilt, Thou exalted whom Thou wilt, and Thou abasest whom Thou wilt; in Thy hand is the good; Thou are powerful over everything.﴿*
>
> (Al 'Imran: 26)

Palestine Ministry of Information

Occupied Palestine



Palestinian Leaders



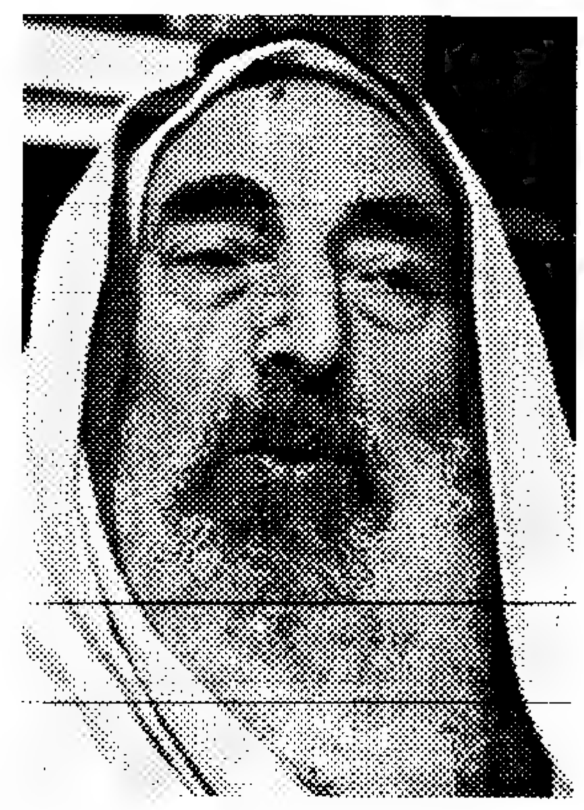
Haj Amin al-Husaini
1895 - 1974



Sheikh Izz al-Din al-Qassam
1882 - 1935



Yasir Arafat
Ex-president of the PLO
and the Palestinian
Authority



Sheikh Ahamd Yasin
Founder and leader of
Hamas

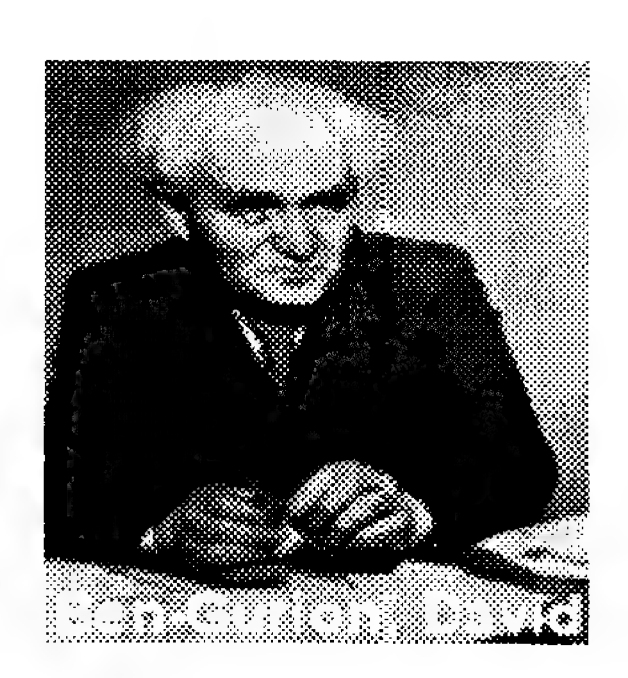
Israeli Leaders



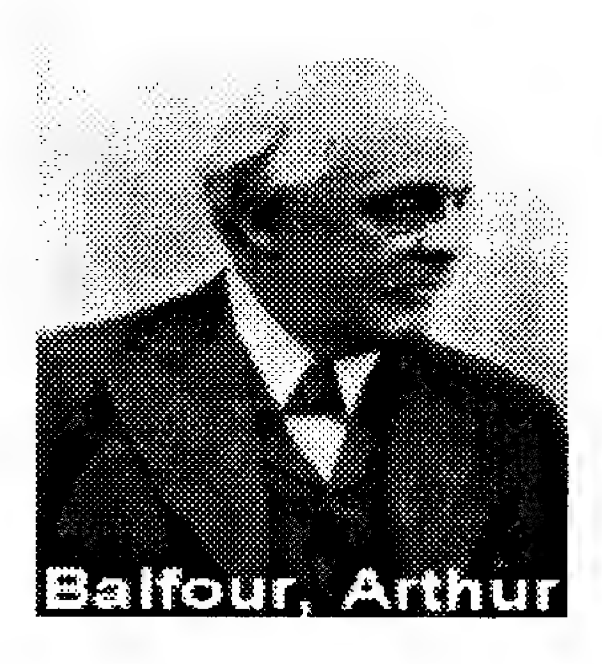
C. Weizmann
President of the World
Zionist Organisation
1920-1931 & 1935-1946.
Fist President of the Zionist
State



T. Herzl
Founding President of the
World Zionist Organisation
1897- 1904



D. Ben Gurion
Leader of the World Zionist
Organisation 1946-1956.
Fist Prime Minister of the
Zionist State



Balfour
The British Secretary of State
for Foreign Affairs, who
issued Balfour Declaration
2/11/1917

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